WORLD / A25

Fans worldwide pay tribute to 'Crocodile Hunter'

BUSINESS/ B1

Inflation eased further to 6.3% in August; strong peso, stable crude cost temper price increases

ACROSS / A19

Peace talks with MILF resume

ENTERTAINMENT / D1

Did RP 'Idol' results irk you? Vote, Mr. C says

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Wednesday, September 6, 2006 ★★ 5 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 270 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Officials say security expert is a braggart

By Nikko Dizon

A DAY AFTER MALACAÑANG ANNOUNCED A planned meeting between President Macapagal-Arroyo and a security expert who said he had sneaked bomb materials aboard an aircraft during a test, airport authorities challenged the man's credentials and said he was bragging.

The highest ranking officials in charge of air-

OFFICIALS/ A12

Machos, say a prayer for poor male mantises

ATTENTION: MEN WHO behave like slugs.

A gruesome ritual is in full swing in the eastern United States.

The praying mantis and its relative, the Chinese mantis, are in their courtship season. A male

MACHOS/ A10

Palparan dead man walking, says NPA

The people will protect me, says general

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan should consider himself a "dead man walking" after he retires from the military on Sept. 11, the spokesperson of the New People's Army in Central Luzon said on Monday.

Speaking to the INQUIRER by phone, Jose Agtalon said efforts by the NPA Josepino Corpuz Command to kill Palparan, the outgoing commander of the Army's 7th Infantry Division, had not stopped.

The NPA wants Palparan to pay for his alleged string of human rights atrocities against civilians and political activists in the region, according to Agtalon.

In a separate statement, Agtalon said the controversial general had "been judged and will surely face revolutionary justice."

"He is a war criminal and must be judged as such. He is responsible for the killing of more than 70 unarmed civilians and no less than 50 abductions. He is a law unto himself, violating not only the basic rights of people but international humanitarian law with regard to the rights of civilians in armed conflict," he said.

Palparan, he said, showed the "real face of the fascist state."

President Macapagal-Arroyo and the US government are also being held responsible for "Palparan's rampage in Central Luzon," Agtalon said. *(See related story on Page A17.)*

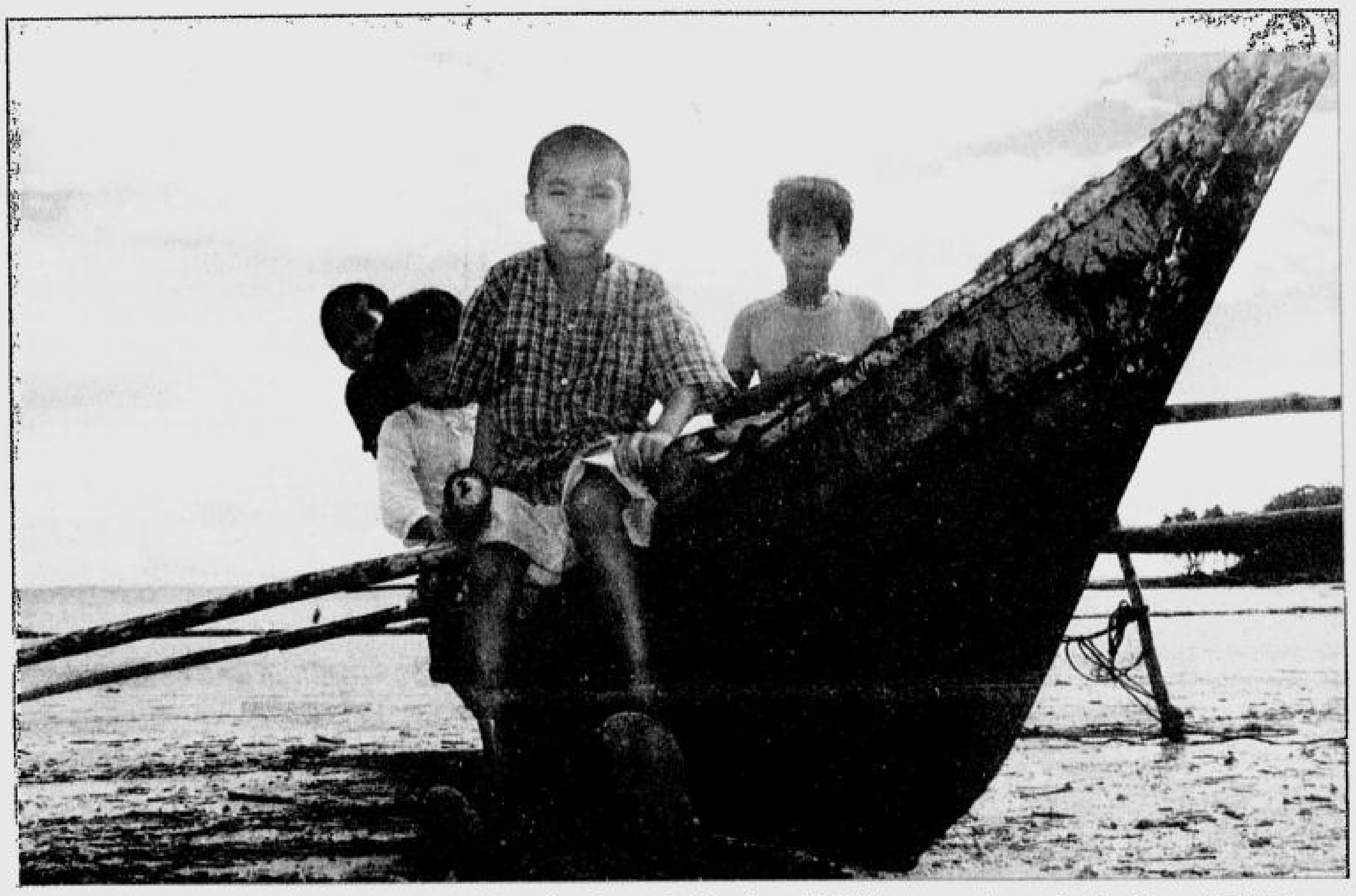
Palparan brushed off the threat to his life.

"I will be a 'free man walking,'" he told the INQUIRER.

"The rebels have been reduced significantly and their forces are thinning out because of mass surrenders or desertion," Palparan said.

Even after he leaves the military,

PALPARAN/ A9



CHILDREN OF GUIMARAS—Will we ever build sand castles on the beach again? Children seem to ponder the future of oil-slick covered shores in Barangay Tando, Nueva Valencia, on Guimaras.

ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

DOJ panel finds captain, execs liable for oil spill

By Armand N. Nocum and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

A DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE PANEL yesterday recommended criminal and civil charges against the captain of the MT Solar I and its owners as well as executives of Petron Corp. for the worst oil spill in the nation's history.

"There is criminal negligence on the part of the captain, Norberto Aguro, and crew members; criminal and civil liability for (the) officers of Sunshine Maritime Development Corp. (SMDC) for torts, and civil liability for the officers of Petron Corp.," said the panel in a report following Monday's hearing.

In the report, Justice Undersecretaries Macabangkit Lanto and Ernesto Pineda said those to be charged included Petron distribution manager Roland B. Salonga, Sunshine Maritime president Clemente Cancio and Aguro.

They will be charged with violation of the Revised Penal Code provision on reckless imprudence resulting in homicide and damage to property, the National Internal Revenue Code, the Corporation Code (Batas Pambansa Blg. 68), the Anti-Dummy Law (Commonwealth Act No. 108) and the Clean Water Act (Republic Act No. 9295).

But Pineda said Petron was getting off with a relatively lighter offense because it had simply chartered the Solar I, which sank on Aug. 11 in rough seas off Guimaras Island, spilling bunker fuel oil and polluting a 220-km coastline, fertile

DOJ PANEL/ A7

JOBS-SKILLS MISMATCH

Wanted: College graduates with dirty hands

By Nikko Dizon

(Second of a series)

COMING TO TERMS WITH RISING EMployment demands driven essentially by the global village means overhauling a Filipino mind-set that puts a premium on diplomas that will land a graduate a cushy job.

"Actually, a person right now with skills in tourism has a better chance of being hired than, maybe, a graduate from one of the better known colleges," says Presidential Adviser on Jobs Creation Arthur Yap.

Likened to an orchestra conductor, Yap coordinates strategies of various departments to meet President Macapagal-Arroyo's goal of creating an environment capable of generating a million jobs a year that will lift the country from poverty and put the nation on the road to prosperity.

He firmly believes in the "ladderized education program" launched by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) and the Commission on Higher Education (CHEd) this year and the emphasis on practical vocational courses.

When one enters a technical-vocational (tech-voc) school and gets practical training, one becomes a productive mem-

WANTED/ A10

i-TEAM Report
Fernando del Mundo
Chief

SPARKS of hope for better paying technical jobs.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Don Bosco's tech-voc program pays off

By Jocelyn R. Uy

FIVE MONTHS FROM NOW, 20-YEAR-OLD Nico Leander will have grease-stained hands and dirty overalls.

He will be working full time at a car company, just as he had always dreamed.

Leander is among the 1,000 boys enrolled at the Don Bosco Manpower Skills Training Center. All of them will be hired by various manufacturing and automotive companies before the year ends, says Loreto San Pedro, the center's assistant technical director who had won a scholarship from the school when he was in high school.

The Don Bosco MSTC, under the auspices of the Salesian priests, opened its doors in 1973 to young men who could not afford to go to college. The pioneering

DON BOSCO'S/ A10

'Prophet of boom' sees salvation in GoNegosyo

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

AUTOMOTIVE MECHANICS, INDUSTRIAL welding, baking, sewing and appliance repair are not the only skills that the government and the private sector are promoting.

Entrepreneurship is likewise being promoted, and the government has never been more bullish on its prospects of generating millions of jobs.

Testament to the Arroyo administration's seriousness in this endeavor is the creation of an Office of the Presidential Adviser for Entrepreneurship with Jose Ma. Concepcion III, RFM Corp. chief executive officer, at the helm.

Concepcion is his own "prophet of

PROPHET/ A10

Good people help Cerezo quads face future

QUADRUPLETS Mary Joy, Mary Grace, Mary Rose and Mary Jane Cerezo are now 7 years old and in Grade 2 three years after the photo, at right, with their mother appeared on the INQUIRER front page.

BEN MOSES EBREO/ INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

By Ben Moses Ebreo
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGABAG, NUEVA VIZCAYA—WHEN THE CEREZO quadruplets were 4 years old, their widowed mother placed them in a 1- by 2-meter wooden playpen so she could tend to her "sari-sari" (variety) store, her only means of livelihood.

That was three years ago.

Now 7 years old, Mary Grace (Kringkring), Mary Rose (Jingjing), Mary Jane (Wengweng) and Mary Joy (Tingting) Cerezo go to school, play and simply enjoy being children.

With their mother's courage and the public's help, the quadruplets have adjusted and are quite happy to be in second grade at the Bagabag South Primary School

GOOD/ A9

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Luzon will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening. SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/09/05/06

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

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Senators seek God's TRO against killings

By TJ Burgonio

WHERE CAN YOU HEAR AN opening prayer imploring God to issue a "temporary restraining order" against extrajudicial killings, corruption and fraud? And where would you see the same prayer being immediately corrected for being politically incorrect?

Only in the Senate.

Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. opened yesterday's session with a quaint prayer beseeching God to put a "permanent injunction" on the killing of journalists and leftist activists, and cheating, but ended up getting a theology lecture from Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

"Just for this day, we ask God to issue a TRO on corruption by the corrupt, extrajudicial killings by death squads roaming the country, cheating by cheaters in and outside government," he said in his brief prayer in the session hall packed with spectators, mostly students.

"Hopefully, after 24 hours, O Lord, many of our people should have savored the salvific message of genuine freedom, justice and peace. And we ask you Lord to make the injunction permanent tomorrow. This I ask in Jesus' name."

To this, Senate Pro Tempore Juan Flavier, occupying Senate President Manuel Villar Jr.'s seat at the rostrum, said: "Amen."

But in a move that surprised many, Santiago rose to make a point of information on the use of the term God, saying the proper term was "Intelligent Designer."

"It tends to conjure up the image of a man in flowing white robes. Feminists, of course, object because it's a gender-based impression, and claim that God [should] be portrayed as a woman. But, of course, that is irrelevant because God is neither a woman, man or even a person. So today, the term of choice is no longer God or even Creator, but Intelligent Designer," she said.

She further pointed out that it was inaccurate to ascribe something "temporary" to the Intelligent Designer who is "outside space and time."

"Today we believe that God is outside space and outside time. So if God, or the Intelligent Designer, deigns to grant the request of Senator Pimentel, it can't possibly be temporary in nature because God is outside time or space, and any restraining order would be permanent in the sense that it would become a law of nature," she concluded, eliciting laughter from some of her colleagues.

Pimentel merely sat in his chair and did not make any comment.

Flavier added: "The TRO has already been issued."

Social services enjoy P8.5B from new taxes

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION YESTERDAY said it was able to spread the gain from the recent painful fiscal reforms, spending P8.5 billion of the revenues from new taxes in the first eight months this year for education, social services and infrastructure.

"During the first half this year, new revenues from the VAT (value added tax) and other tax reforms were invested in new school buildings, textbooks, teaching materials, training programs and social services," said President Macapagal-Arroyo in a speech during the economic manager's briefing in Makati yesterday.

Continue economic reforms

The administration plans to spend about a quarter of the estimated P77.5 billion revenues from the new taxes this year for social services.

Presidential Management Staff Chief Arthur Yap said this would ease the pain of the higher cost of products and services arising from economic reform measures—the lifting of all VAT exemptions and raising the VAT rate from 10 percent to 12 percent—and ensure that these benefits flow down to the masses.

In her speech, the President said she would continue with economic reforms even though her decision to increase taxes and eliminate subsidies contributed to her becoming the most disliked President in history.

"There is a political price for these long overdue economic reforms. But I am content to see my popularity go down as long as the nation's fortunes rise as a result of these positive economic reforms. Let me be clear—these reforms will continue," said Ms Arroyo.

After taking over a government neck-deep in debt amid declining revenue collections, the President embarked on a fiscal reform program that began with the removal of state subsidies, particularly on power, imposing discipline on spending on both state agencies and corporations, and raising new taxes.

"In 2001, I committed to an economic plan to lay the foundation to building prosperity for the greatest number of people. Despite the challenge posed by soaring oil prices, we have made significant progress towards achieving that goal. The economic indicators underscore the success of our policy—the deficit is down, the stock market is up and the peso is strong. We have much work to do but it is clear that progress is being made," the President told her audience of businessmen and economists.

Making good things happen

Ms Arroyo also paid tribute to her economic managers—many of them installed hastily last July 8 to replace the Hyatt 10 group of Cabinet officials who resigned and demanded the President's resignation—for "making good things happen to the Philippines."

After stabilizing the economy and improving the fiscal situation, she said the next step would be "to take advantage of our improved economic environment and strengthen the competitiveness" of the Philippines by restructuring the economy and strengthening the natural advantages of five regions to create opportunities across the country.

The President has outlined a P2-trillion infrastructure spending program over the next five years, to be funded by government and the private sector, to remove the economic bottlenecks that have prevented the national wealth from spreading to the provinces.

"Our country is too Manila-focused in its politics and its economic wealth. We should not rely on trickle-down economics from Manila to do the job. Our success in extending economic gains to all corners of our country lies in national infrastructure that will lower costs and increase productivity while creating more well-paying jobs," she said.

"Only a strong economy will reduce poverty and expand our middle class," the President said.

Yap said the bulk of the P8.5 billion went to social services (P6.7 billion) and infrastructure (P1.9 billion).

Based on a report to the Cabinet by the Department of Finance, the biggest beneficiaries were the education department (P2.4 billion) which used the money for teacher training, textbook purchases, and school-feeding programs, and the Department of National Defense (P1.03 billion) which liquidated the education and pension benefits of war veterans.

KUNG 'DI NATIN PAPALITAN ANG NAPAG-IWANAN, 'DI TAYO AANGAT.

Kung ikukumpara sa eroplano ang sistema ng gobyerno sa atin at sa ating mga kapitbansa, jumbo jet na ang kanila samantalang propeller-type pa rin tayo.

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The Social Security System is inviting offers to purchase by way of sealed bids the following properties:

Item No.	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION OF PROPERTY	MINIMUM BID
1	294 sq.m. TCT No. T-190,866 3 BR with 1 T&B Fairly maintained Split-level bungalow	B3L2 Seafront Drive, Seafoods Subd., Baliwasan Seaside, Zamboanga City	580,600.00
2	200 sq.m. TCT No. T-181,579 2 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	L11 B1 Green Valley Subd., San Roque, Zamboanga City	201,000.00
3	200 sq.m. TCT No. T-181,577 2 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	Lot 1860-S, Sampaguita Rd., Guiwan, Zamboanga City	248,300.00
4	150 sq.m. TCT No. T-183,966 2 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	Lot 2125-A-2-A-1 Daisy Road, Guiwan, Zamboanga City	295,300.00
5	228 sq.m. TCT No. T-183,962 3 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	Lot 8 Blk 5 Narra Drive, Tugbungan, Zamboanga City	541,200.00
6	150 sq.m. TCT No. T-183,964 2 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	Lot 1A Pasonanca, Zamboanga City	253,800.00
7	366 sq.m. TCT No. T-183,959 2 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	Lot 649 D1B Ailano Drive, Canelar, Zamboanga City	475,200.00
8	400 sq.m. TCT No. T-182,429 2 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	Lot 238-E-2-H ZAMCELCO Dv., Recodo, Zamboanga City	245,300.00
9	207 sq.m. TCT No. T-183,961 3 BR with 1 T&B Fairly maintained Bungalow	Lot 2117-D-10-F, A&W Subd., Guiwan, Zamboanga City	458,800.00
10	200 sq.m. TCT No. T-183,965 LOT ONLY	Lot 1918-C-9-B-1 Gonzales Dv., Sampaguita Rd., Guiwan, Zamboanga City	300,000.00
11	180 sq.m. TCT No. T-165,234 2 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	L4 B3 Felisano Village, Divisoria, Zamboanga City	280,000.00
12	300 sq.m. TCT No. T-183,960 3 BR with 1 T&B Fairly maintained Bungalow	Lot 15 Blk 2 Rahja Village, Sta. Cruz, Tumaga, Zamboanga City	625,000.00
13	200 sq.m. TCT No. T-165,876 3 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	L10 Recodo, Zamboanga City	370,300.00
14	250 sq.m. TCT No. T-190,870 3 BR with 1 T&B Deteriorated Bungalow	L2125-B-3-1-B-5-C Adalia Village, Guiwan, Zamboanga City	388,000.00
15	250 sq.m. TCT No. T-183,963 3 BR with 1 T&B Fairly maintained Bungalow	Lot 324-A-3-D-4 Tugbungan, Zamboanga City	482,600.00
16	500 sq.m. TCT No. T-181,582 2 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	Lot 243 New 7H Sampaloc Drive, Talon-Talon, ZC	365,400.00
17	293 sq.m. TCT No. T-181,583 2 BR with 1 T&B Poor maintained Bungalow	Lot 2002 B-2C-2 Tumaga-Putik Rd., Putik, Zamboanga City	274,100.00
18	275 sq.m. TCT No. T-181,560 2 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	Lot 2002 B2-K2 Tumaga-Putik Rd., Putik, Zamboanga City	333,300.00
19	250 sq.m. TCT No. T-166,380 2 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	Lot 1897-B-3-B Lorenzo Heights, Putik, Zamboanga City	147,400.00
20	200 sq.m. TCT No. T-183,967 2 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	Lot 6 Blk 1 Green Valley Subd., San Roque, Zamboanga City	255,700.00
21	160 sq.m. TCT No. T-190,869 2 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Bungalow	L1871 A1 A2 Sampaguita Rd., Guiwan, Zamboanga City	311,800.00
22	300 sq.m. TCT No. T-190,865 No wall partition deteriorated Bungalow	Lot 1976 D1 Tumaga-Putik Road, Zamboanga City	250,000.00

Complete description of the properties including BIDDING FORMS & INSTRUCTION TO BIDDERS are available at the SSS Zamboanga Cluster, PHIDCO Bldg., Veterans Avenue, Zamboanga City. Please contact MR. MICHAEL L. DE LEON at Telephone Nos. (062) 991-20-07, 991-25-44 and 991-06-24.

Sealed bids should be dropped at the Bid Box located at the PHIDCO Bldg., Veterans Avenue, Zamboanga City from 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. on 26 September 2006. The bids should be labeled **Acquired Assets Disposal Committee, Social Security System.**

Bidder's deposit, equivalent to at least 30% (if bidder is former owner, their spouses, parents and children) or 10% (if bidder does not fall under the preceding category) of the bid price in cash (Philippine money/ U.S. dollar) or in Certified Manager's Check in favor of SSS must be enclosed with the sealed bid. (Any other form or draft purportedly as manner of payment is not acceptable). The bidder must also sign the sealed envelope across its flap. Sealed bid without the bidder's deposit will not be entertained.

The award shall be made to the bidder who made the most advantageous offer to the SSS. As a rule, cash bids shall be preferred over installment bids. An installment bid shall, however, be considered as more advantageous if the installment bid is greater by at least 20% over a cash bid. In case of installment bids, the bid with the shortest payment period shall be preferred unless the difference in the bids is greater by at least 20%, in which case the bid with the longer payment period shall be considered more advantageous to the SSS.

The sale of the properties shall be "As Is, Where Is". The winning bidder shall undertake the responsibility to acquire and maintain peaceful possession and enjoyment of the property without seeking the assistance of the SSS.

After deducting the bid deposit from the Bid Price, the balance shall be payable either in cash within 30 days or amortized up to a maximum of 120 months at pre-determined interest rate. If bidder opts to amortize, proof of income (ITR, business permit or Certificate of Employment and Compensation) shall be among the documents for submission on bidding date. Upon approval of the sale, the buyer shall issue twelve (12) PDCs covering the first year of amortization and the same number of checks for each succeeding year until fully paid. Actual expenses or advances made by SSS for foreclosure and consolidation of title shall be added to purchase price of the former owner or his successor-in-interest should the fair market value be less than the consolidated value of the property.

The system reserves the right to reject any or all bids, or to waive any defect found therein.

All awards shall be subject to the confirmation of the Social Security Commission whose decision shall be final and binding on all concerned.

(Sgd.) AVP MARIANO PABLO S. TOLENTINO
Chairperson, Acquired Assets Disposal Committee

(PDI - Sept. 6, 2006)

Defense lawyers in Subic rape trial planning to go for 'impact' in opening salvo

HALFWAY THROUGH THE SUBIC rape trial, a contrast in strategy is emerging: While prosecution had opted for a gradual buildup of evidence, the defense apparently wants to go for "impact" right away.

Six days before the landmark trial resumes, Filipino lawyers defending the four accused US Marines reportedly plan to present Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith as their first witness.

Smith has been tagged by the Filipino complainant "Nicole" as the one who allegedly raped her in a moving van while the three other American soldiers cheered him on. The alleged incident took place on the night of Nov. 1, 2005 at the Subic Freeport.

"If it were building a house, Smith's testimony is like laying the foundation on which all the other building blocks will be based," according to a source privy to case, who requested not to be named. *Volt Contreras*

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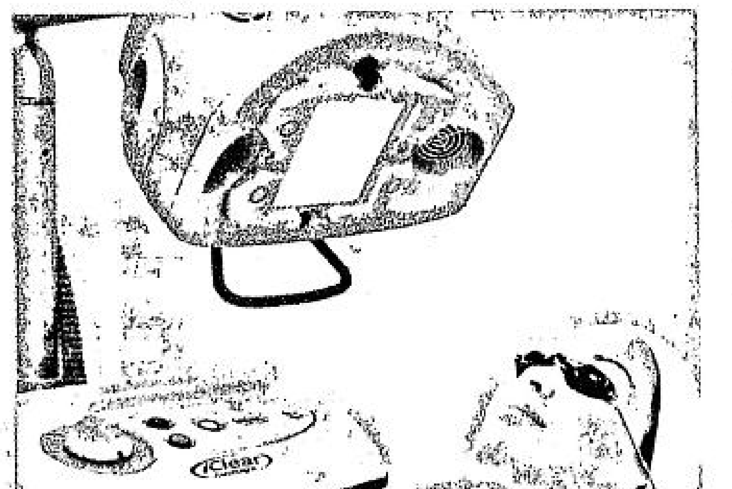

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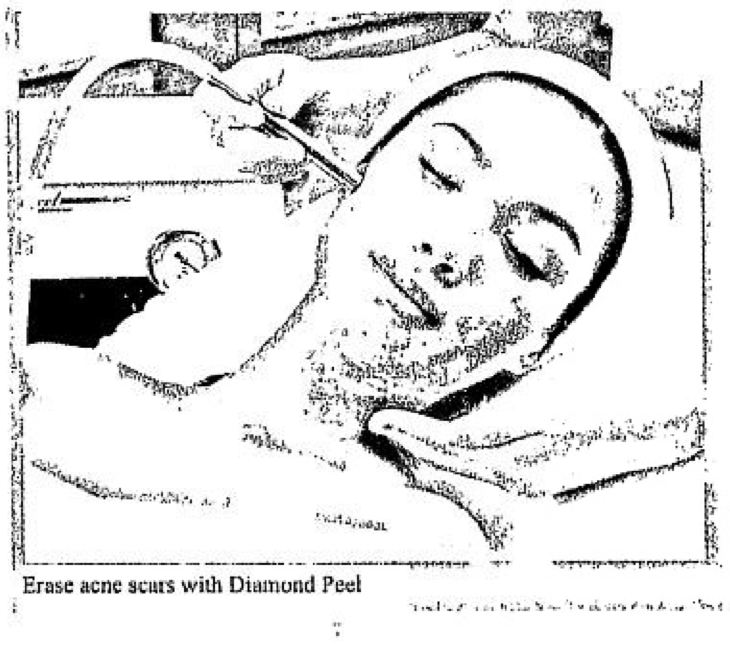

Erase acne scars with Diamond Peel

Your graduation picture. Your wedding. Your 40th birthday party. All these would have been perfect if not for such an untimely annoyance: acne.

Often it occurs on the day when you least want it on your face, like if you are meeting someone you want to impress or will be part of an event involving a lot of pictures getting taken. Acne can start as early as your adolescent years, and can follow you right through adulthood. Whether you're 16, 29 or 40, acne still has the same effect on you: lowered self-esteem, a bad mood and most likely, a self-conscious behavior.

Facial Care Centre offers a 3-step surefire way to permanently combat any type of acne. The first step involves treating the existing acne. In order to eliminate existing pimples and acne cysts, **LightCure Acne Therapy** is a highly effective treatment. It is recommended for mild, moderate and heavy acne. It uses the emission of exact wavelengths of light at the most effective intensity for complete destruction of acne bacteria. LightCure works by targeting sebaceous glands where there are abnormal bacteria responsible for the inflammation of acne lesions. The high-intensity light emitted by LightCure starts a chemical reaction that destroys the acne bacteria without any damage to the normal skin. LightCure is painless, and works faster than conventional treatments like oral antibiotics, hormonal pills, retinoids and injections.

Once the acne has been eliminated, the second step of erasing acne scars follows. Through the **Diamond Peel**, acne scars and other blemishes can be successfully removed. With the use of a diamond dust-coated wand, the skin is exfoliated by the combined action of diamond chips and the cleaning action of a vacuum. As a result, the dead cells in the topmost layer of the skin are removed, leaving a clearer new layer that is smoother and even. Unlike other skin peeling methods, the Diamond Peel requires no downtime and no anesthesia is necessary in performing the procedure. It is non-surgical, non-invasive, extremely safe and effective.

The final step is the maintenance of the new skin and the prevention of future acne breakouts. The **Deep Anti-Bacterial Facial** is a highly intensive facial that uses the finest natural ingredients to avoid the onset of new acne. It also involves a mild exfoliating method to rid the skin of impurities that are not easily removed by superficial washing and cleansing. Regular treatments ensure smooth, clear, acne-free skin.

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Mike Defensor to Pimentel: Look who's talking

By Christine O. Avendaño, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Jerome Aning

PRESIDENTIAL CHIEF OF STAFF Michael Defensor yesterday turned the tables on Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, saying the latter had asked for his help on a land case in 2001 when he was the presidential adviser on housing.

Defensor said he was bringing this up because back then he had facilitated a concern raised by Pimentel, in the same way he had intervened in the nursing jobs controversy involving Filipino nurses in New York and a Manila-based recruitment agency for which he had been accused by the senator of being a "*padrino*" (godfather).

"How can he be so hypocritical that we should be doing this or that?" Defensor said in a phone interview.

He said that in 2001, Pimentel had sought his help in a dispute that his son, Koko Pimentel, had with Cagayan de Oro City Mayor Emano over the latter's distribution of land in the province for free.

He said he told the senator the matter did not come under his office but the Bureau of Local Finance of the Department of Interior and Local Government since it was a local government issue.

Yet, Defensor said, he took it upon himself to talk to bureau officials and relay what they told him to Pimentel.

"I did not side with anyone in that case," he said.

His job back then—and now as President Macapagal-Arroyo's chief of staff—involved facilitating [things] for people, he said.

"It doesn't mean that we're doing something illegal," Defensor said.

Pimentel, for his part, wants Defensor summoned to the Senate labor committee investigation of the complaint of the 28 Filipino nurses in New York against Pasig City-based Sentosa Recruitment Agency.

"He has been caught with his pants down," Pimentel said.

Pimentel had identified Defensor as the Cabinet official who intervened to lift the suspension order issued by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration on Sentosa for allegedly shortchanging the nurses, including 2004 medical board exams topnotcher Elmer Jacinto.

The nurses said they were now living in abandoned houses after the jobs, pay and benefits promised them by Sentosa did not come through.

In a privilege speech on Monday, Pimentel said the POEA lifted its suspension of Sentosa on June 8, a day after Defensor called up Philippine consul general Cecil Rebong in New York. He said Defensor had also phoned POEA administrator Rosalinda Baldoz on behalf of Sentosa.

Pimentel said Defensor told the two officials the 28 nurses were better off not pursuing their breach of contract case against Sentosa.

Pimentel said that after they arrived in New York, the nurses were turned over to a Sentosa entity—Sentosa Bent Philipson, which in turn placed the nurses in the custody of Sentosa Care LLC, a limited liability company that runs nursing homes in New York. A third entity called Prompt Nursing Employment Agency/Sentosa Services also came into the picture apparently as the actual employer of the nurses.

Sentosa Care LLC yesterday said it was a victim of "baseless accusations" and denied duping the 28 Filipino nurses.

In a statement, Sentosa lawyer Ibaro Relamida Jr. claimed the nurses, together with one physical therapist, were prodded to file their complaint by a Filipino immigration lawyer identified with a Sentosa competitor in New York.

"They [the nurses] abandoned their posts in various Sentosa facilities without due notice, in violation of the terms of their contract and New York laws," Relamida said.

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Correction

IN YESTERDAY'S ISSUE, a front-page story—"Solon links Defensor to nursing jobs mess"—failed to state the first name of the senator who said Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor had acted as the "padrino" of a recruitment agency accused of duping Filipino nurses. The senator was Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Lorna Kalaw Tirol, readers' advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirer.com. ph or fax Nos. 897-47-93/94, Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-8808 Local 342.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, September 6, 2006
22nd Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 1 Cor 3:1-9
Gsopel: Luke 4:38-44

Leaving the synagogue, Jesus went to the house of Simon. His mother-in-law was suffering from high fever and they asked him to do something for her. Bending over her, he rebuked the fever, and it left her. Immediately she got up and waited on them.

At sunset, people suffering from many kinds of sickness were brought to Jesus. Laying his hands on each one, he healed them. Demons were driven out, howling as they departed from their victims, "You are the Son of God!" He rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, for they knew he was the Messiah.

Jesus left at daybreak and looked for a solitary place. People went out in search of him and, finding him, they tried to dissuade him from leaving. But he said, "I have to go to other towns to announce the good news of the kingdom of God. That is what I was sent to do." So Jesus continued to preach in the synagogues of the Jewish country.

Commentary

The Word of the Scripture is our food and we've been eating it since baptism. But are we still acting like ordinary people, with divisions and claims to who is more important than the others? Are we still acting like irresponsible children rather than working with God for the growth of the human community?

Jesus leaves the synagogue and immediately goes to work: healing, freeing, bringing hope and solace to Peter's mother-in-law, and then to everyone who hears the good news. We too are sent with Jesus to proclaim the goodness and power of God in Jesus. Is this what we are known for after praying?

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Heritage Hotel

COOKING / PRODUCT PRESENTATION
Exhibition Hall - Activity Area

SEPTEMBER 6 – Wednesday
11:00 AM TRENDS, RECIPES TECHNIQUES
By Chef Jun Jun De Guzman, Chef Dorothy Ferrera, Chef Joey Prats
SEPTEMBER 7 – Thursday
11:00 AM NEW DEL MONTE PARTY DRINKS, SHAKE, POUR & SERVED
By: Ms. Angie Castillo
1.00 PM WILTON CAKE DECORATION
By Ms Susan San Miguel
2:30 PM EXPERIENCE THE FREEDOM TO INNOVATE AS EQUILIBRIUM INTERTRADE LAUNCHES THE NEW TORANI PURE FLAVORS
4:00 PM I CAKES & TORTE VARIATIONS USING CHIFFON & BUTTER-BASE CAKES
II EL REAL HOLIDAY PASTA DISHES
By Chef Dennis Hipolito
SEPTEMBER 8 – Friday
11:00 AM ALL ABOUT CHOCOLATE
By Ms Dorothy Ferrera
FLOWER MAKING
By Ms. Aveline Florendo of CCS Bakeshop & School
1:00 PM DONUT & CORNDOG FACTORY CART BUSINESS
By Ed Franco
2:30 PM COOKING DEMO
By. Sysu International
4:00 PM EXOTIC ASIA: FOOD OF THE GODS - A FIERY QUEST INTO THE MAGIC FLAVORS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA
By Chef Jundy Gueco
SEPTEMBER 9 – Saturday
11:00 AM CHEF MEETS THE BAKER
By Ms Heny Sison & Chef Gene Gonzales

TECHNICAL SEMINAR / PRODUCT PRESENTATION
Seminar Room 1 & 2

SEPTEMBER 6 - Wednesday
2:30 PM DEVELOPING YOUR OWN SPECIALTY FOOD - BEVERAGE SAUCES, YOGURTS, DIPS ETC (Sem. Rm. 1)
4:00 PM STEAM ACCESSORIES FOR ENERGY SAVINGS (Sem. Rm. 1)
SEPTEMBER 7 - Thursday
10:30 AM DIODE ARRAY 7200 EXPRESS LAB NIR ANALYZER, A NEW AND SMART TECHNIQUE (Sem. Rm. 1)
1:00 PM LATEST DEVELOPMENT IN MODIFIED STARCHES FOR USE IN MEAT AND BAKERY (Sem. Rm. 1)
2:30 PM INDUSTRIAL CLEANING SOLUTIONS FOR THE FOOD INDUSTRY (Sem. Rm. 1)
4:00 PM SOURCING EQUIPMENT FROM CHINA (Seminar Rm. 1)
4:00 PM I. NEW EUROPEAN FOOD DIRECTIVES IN 2006 & IMPLICATIONS TO ASIAN FOOD EXPORTERS TO THE EU COUNTRIES (Sem Rm 2)
II TEMPERATURE CONTROL IN FOOD PROCESSING STORAGE REFRIGERATION AND FREEZING (Sem Rm 2)
SEPTEMBER 8 - Friday
9:00 AM FRANCHISE YOUR BUSINESS (Sem. Rm. 1)
I. Overview of Franchising Industry
II. Franchise Advantage
III. Franchise Development Process
9:00 AM WORLD-CLASS LABORATORIES FOR GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS OF PHILIPPINE FOOD PRODUCTS
By Phil Assn of Laboratory Instrument Users (Sem Rm 2)
1:00 PM AES LABORATOIRE. YOUR PARTNER FROM SAMPLE COLLECTION TO RESULTS IN MICROBIOLOGY (Sem. Rm. 1)
2:30 PM GETTING TO KNOW YOUR ESPRESSO MACHINE (Sem Rm. 1)
4:00 PM TECHNICAL PRESENTATION ON BOILER TECHNOLOGY FOCUSING ON ENERGY CONSERVATION (Sem. Rm. 1)
SEPTEMBER 9 - Saturday
9:00 AM A TO Z OF BUYING A FRANCHISE (Sem Rm. 1)
1:00 PM I. INVENTORY CONTROL USING LABELING A PLATFORM SCALES
II. ADVANTAGES OF USING INSTA-PANEL FOR COLD STORAGE CLEAN ROOM (Sem Rm 1)
2:30 PM WHEAT FLOUR QUALITY TESTING, HANDLING & STORAGE (Sem Rm. 1)
2:30 PM MEGA PROFITS IN THE COFFEE BUSINESS (Sem. Rm 2)

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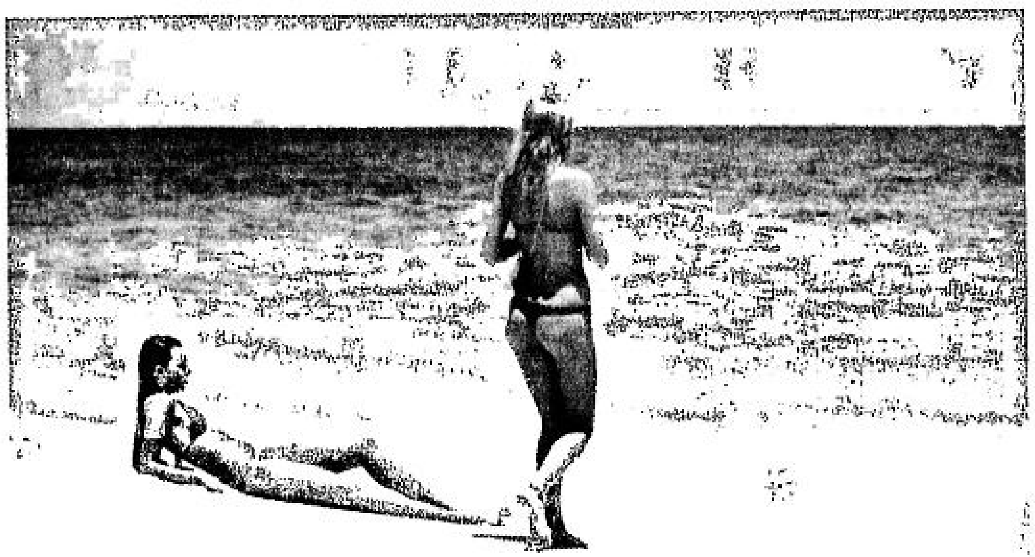

BORACAY: More trouble in paradise.

PDI FILE

Storm brewing over gov't plan to sell Boracay lots

By Philip C. Tubeza

A VIOLENT STORM IS BREWING OVER Boracay.

Aklan Rep. Florencio Miraflores yesterday denounced the government's announcement that prized lots in the world-class tourist island-resort were for sale, saying this was scaring off would-be investors.

In a privilege speech at the House of Representatives, Miraflores scored the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for "making rash pronouncements that prized Boracay lots were now up for grabs, rattling not only Boracay residents but potential investors. Right now, the situation obtaining could be described as the calm before the storm."

He also scored the DENR for claiming the alienable land on Boracay could only be sold through public auction.

He said there were three other means of disposing of the 628.96 hectares of alienable land on the island—through homestead, lease or free patent—but the DENR was focusing only on sales through auction.

He said the DENR was unwittingly telling Boracay investors that they "had no foolproof guarantee of private ownership because the government could, with a proclamation, auction off their properties."

"The DENR pronouncement is now sending the wrong signal and creating uncertainty among Boracay investors who have put on hold some projects and major developments because of this issue," Miraflores said.

The government started planning for the sale of Boracay lots after President Macapagal-Arroyo issued Proclamation No. 1064 classifying land on the island as forest and agricultural.

Up for grabs

"Soon after the issuance of the proclamation, newspapers, particularly the Philippine Daily Inquirer, [headlined] stories that prized Boracay lots were now up for grabs, with the DENR saying it would hold a public bidding," Miraflores said.

The lawmaker pointed out the Public Land Act requires an applicant to cultivate and introduce improvements to "at least one-fifth of the land he offered to purchase within five years from the date of award."

"From this provision alone, it is very clear that the intent of the law is to sell underdeveloped agricultural land," Miraflores said.

"How does the DENR then interpret this legal provision in the case of Boracay where lands are developed? And if the above provision could not be rightly interpreted by the DENR, a paragraph of the DENR sales application form could provide them with a more clear instruction," he said.

Miraflores said that anyone interested in buying Boracay lots must swear in the application form to the fact that he had "examined the land applied for, and it contains no improvements or indications of occupation or settlement."

"Esteemed colleagues, I am sure many of you here have been to Boracay Island at one time or another. All of you who have been there can say that what you saw there were not idle undeveloped lands but (were) in fact shoulder-to-shoulder improvements and solid evidence of occupation and settlement. In fact, we have been accused of overdevelopment," Miraflores said.

Miraflores also pointed out the Supreme Court had ruled that while the government had the right to classify public land, "the primary right of an individual who possessed and cultivated the land in good faith much prior to such classification must be recognized and should not be prejudiced by after-events that could not have been anticipated.

Sarmiento, PDI ed's ma, dies; 78

EDITA VERGARA SARMIENTO OF BARAS, Catanduanes, mother of INQUIRER senior desk editor Juan Sarmiento Jr., died yesterday after a lingering illness.

She was 78.

A former public school teacher, she is survived by children Jorge (commissioner of the National Telecommunication Commission), Rene (commissioner of the Commission on Elections), Cesar (former vice governor of Catanduanes), Juan Jr. and Ma. Joy (dentist).

Her body lies at the Jose Rizal chapel of La Funeraria Paz at the Manila Memorial on Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Burial is scheduled for Sunday at the Manila Memorial after the 9 a.m. Mass.

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Sylvia Reynoso Gala
SYLVIA REYNOSO GALA

Troops hunt down Abu Sayyaf in Jolo clashes

HUNDREDS OF US-BACKED Philippine troops yesterday pursued a large group of al-Qaida-linked rebels believed to be led by some of Southeast Asia's most wanted militants, after fierce clashes killed at least six marines, officials said.

The biggest battle yet in a military offensive that started Aug. 1 also wounded 19 marines and killed an unspecified number of Abu Sayyaf guerrillas on Monday near mountainous Patikul town on southern Jolo island, military officials said.

The nearly 200 militants were believed to be led by Abu Sayyaf chieftain Khaddafy Janjalani and his key commanders, including one-armed rebel Radulan Sahiron and Indonesian militants Umar Patek and Dulmatin, allegedly among the masterminds of the 2002 nightclub bombings in Bali, Indonesia that killed 202 people, the officials said.

"Our troops are in the mountains pursuing and trying to neutralize these terrorists to bring back peace to the province," said Maj. Gen. Eugenio Cedo, commander of the military's Western Mindanao Command. He said there have been no fresh clashes since Monday.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo tried to bolster the troops' morale by informing Cedo through cell phone messages that she was praying for them as the clashes raged, he said.

At least 200 Army troops and 100 Marines were pursuing the militants in a thickly forested area straddled by five mountains in Jolo's heartland, said Marine spokesperson Lt. Col. Ariel Caculitan. US military teams were helping track down the militants, he said, without elaborating.

Marines involved in the nearly three hours of fighting recounted how they struggled against poor visibility in the dark, foggy jungle, and how they were surprised by a huge number of militants fighting them.

At least 27 Marines, equipped with a few night-vision goggles, crawled toward a group of more than 20 militants, who were having breakfast at dawn. The Marines hurled grenades, instantly killing many of the militants, Caculitan said. *AP*

Military stands by lone purge witness

THE MILITARY'S MULTIPLE-MURder case against top Communist Party of the Philippines leaders rests mainly on the testimony of a former rebel who said he glanced at a document ordering a wide-reaching "purge" within the communist ranks more than 20 years ago.

The witness, Zacarias Piedad was presented by the military in a news conference in Camp Aguinaldo yesterday.

Piedad claimed that some time in 1984 while in a rebel camp in Burauen, Leyte, he accidentally saw a document signed by the leadership of the CPP-New People's Army ordering the summary execution of suspected government spies within their ranks.

He said he saw the document for five seconds.

He said he recalled that the document was about "Oplan VD" (Venereal Disease), and that he recalled seeing signatures, particularly those of Amado Guerrero, Ka Louie and Ka Satur.

He said Amado Guerrero is the pseudonym of CPP founding chair Jose Ma. Sison; Ka Louie that of National Democratic Front (NDF) chief political consultant Luis Jalandoni; and Ka Satur that of Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo.

He said the purge, which saw the torture and summary killings of a number of NPA rebels, occurred the following year in Leyte.

Piedad said his conscience could not accept it because some of the victims were his relatives. He denied that he was involved in the horrific purge, which occurred in other rebel fronts nationwide during the mid-80s.

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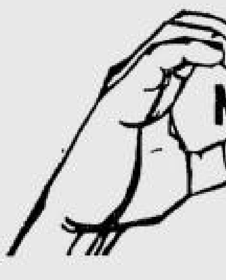

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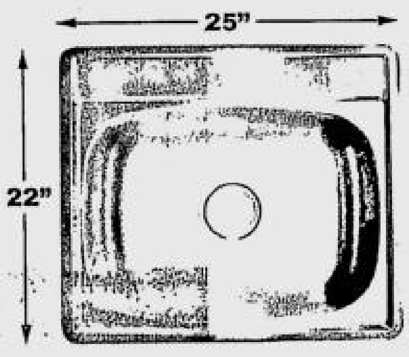

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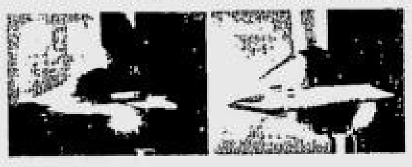

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Supreme Court
Halls of Justice – Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Supreme Court through the Halls of Justice – Bids and Awards Committee invites contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for:

Project : **Replacement of the Roof and Fabrication and Installation of Cabinets, Quezon City Hall of Justice**
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Funding Source : **Judiciary Development Fund**
Completion Period : **Sixty (60) calendar days**

Eligibility forms shall be available upon submission of the Letter of Intent and Application for Eligibility at the Office on Halls of Justice, 7th Floor Centennial Bldg., Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Ermita, Manila. Letters of Intent may likewise be sent through telefax number (02) 552-9590.

Interested bidders are advised to take note of the following schedules:

Submission of Letter of Intent and Application for Eligibility	September 7 to 13, 2006
Submission of Eligibility Requirements	September 21, 2006, 9:00 a.m. at the Office on Halls of Justice, Supreme Court
Issuance of Bid Documents	September 26 to October 3, 2006 *(to be secured from the Office on Halls of Justice upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,000.00)*
Pre Bid Conference	October 12, 2006, 9:00 a.m., Supreme Court
Submission and Opening of Bids	October 26, 2006, 9:00 a.m., Supreme Court

Award shall be made to the bidder who submits the lowest calculated responsive bid. Criteria for the eligibility check of the prospective bidders, examination and evaluation of bids and post-qualification and all matters relevant to this procurement shall be in accordance with Republic Act No. 9184 and its IRR.

For additional information, contact Atty. Peter John Javier or Engr. Arnold Paradero at (02) 552-9589 to 94 or send an e-mail to chojbac@yahoo.com.

The Supreme Court reserves the right to reject any or all bids or offers which it may consider to be disadvantageous and not beneficial to the Court or to waive any defect or informality therein.

August 30, 2006.

(Sgd.) CHRISTOPHER O. LOCK
Chairperson

(PDI- Aug. 30 & Sept. 6, 2006)

DOJ panel finds captain, execs liable for oil spill

From page A1

fishing grounds, marine reserves and tourist resorts.

Both the oil firm and shipowner were asked to pay for torts or damages for the oil spill.

During the panel inquiry, Pineda said Aguro was defiant in not admitting his responsibility for the sinking of the vessel.

No 'marine protest'

Vice Admiral Arthur Gosingan, commandant of the Philippine Coast Guard, told the panel that had the vessel been anchored with Aguro declaring a "marine protest" after seeing that the ship was in trouble, the PCG would have been able to inspect the vessel to see if it was still seaworthy.

"Since there was no protest made, the PCG was not informed, so they were not able to provide assistance. The accident could have been prevented," Pineda said.

The DOJ panel also pointed out Aguro himself had admitted that his license had expired on Jan. 31, 2002.

Although he has a master mariner's certificate, there was a caveat in it that stated that he could only command a chemical tanker, not an oil tanker, Pineda said.

"The Solar I is a bunker oil tanker, but Aguro is a holder of a chemical tanker certificate. The qualifications are not the same for running the two vessels," said the DOJ panel.

Overloaded

Aguro also appeared to have overloaded the vessel when he agreed to bring aboard four employees of Petron to accompany the cargo to Zamboanga City.

The DOJ panel also noted that on three occasions, Aguro did not make use of a tugboat, which would have guided the vessel in docking, a violation of marine rules.

Likewise, Pineda said, Sunshine Maritime's liability lay in its failure to reprimand its captain and possible violation of the Anti-Dummy Law for having the Japanese incorporators shoulder the bulk of its paid-up capital of P5 million.

Petron's liability stemmed from its failure to ensure the safety of the ship that it chartered, the panel said.

"We can't attach any criminal liability on Petron, only to the captain because he is directly involved. Petron is merely the charterer and owner of the cargo but it is liable for negligence in hiring the wrong vessel because it has the obligation to see to it that the vessel is seaworthy," he said.

Final inquiry

The justice department will summon the other crew members of the sunken ship for what could be the last panel inquiry on Friday to determine the physical condition of the captain, whether he was asleep or drunk when the vessel was sinking.

Yesterday, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr., chair of Task Force Guimaras, said he was still waiting for the official recommendation of a group of experts on how best to prevent oil from further spilling from the Solar I.

The experts include representatives of the International Oil Pollution Contingency Fund (IOPC), the P&I Club, Petron, the Fukada Salvage and Marine Works and the Philippine Coast Guard. The IOPC is an organization of oil firms from 190 countries while P&I Club is the insurer of the Solar I.

The vessel, which lies at the bottom of the sea, was carrying approximately 2 million liters of oil when it sank, a quarter of which has reportedly spilled.

Siphoning of remaining oil likely

Cruz said the Japanese firm Fukada, which was contracted by Petron to assess the tanker's condition, had "verbally recommended" siphoning off the remaining oil rather than refloating or entombing the tanker.

"What they're looking at is to siphon off the remaining oil in coordination with the IOPC. The IOPC said that while this is expensive, it can be subject to compensation," Cruz said yesterday after another top-level meeting of the task force in Camp Aguinaldo.

Fukada's research ship, the Shinsei Maru, which did a survey of the Solar I through a remote-operated vehicle (ROV) last week, does not have the capability to siphon off the fuel or to refloat the tanker. It left after four days' work.

According to the Shinsei Maru's findings, of the 10 containers on the Solar I, one was empty while another was "slowly leaking," Cruz said.

He belied some media reports that a Norwegian firm had been contracted to siphon the oil.

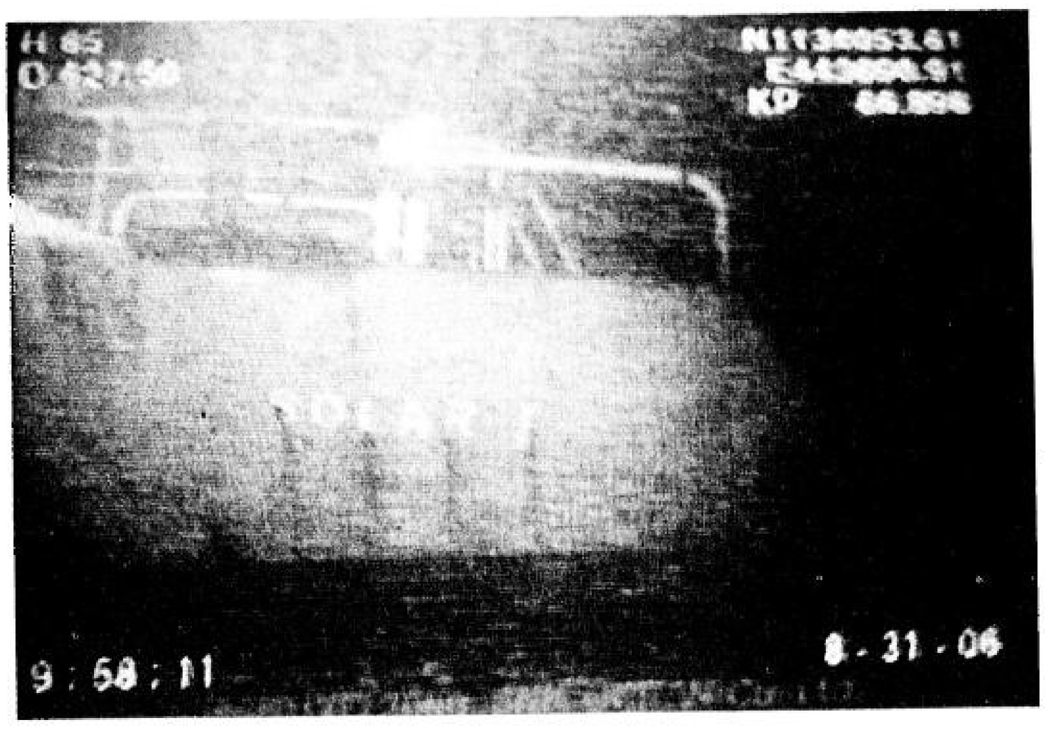
"They don't know how much oil there is," Cruz said. He added the siphoning could be done since the tanker was "standing erect" while listing a little.

Up to experts

While he admitted that siphoning the remaining the oil was "important," Cruz said he could not set a deadline for this operation since the decision was up to the "experts." He said the process should also be approved by the insurance firms.

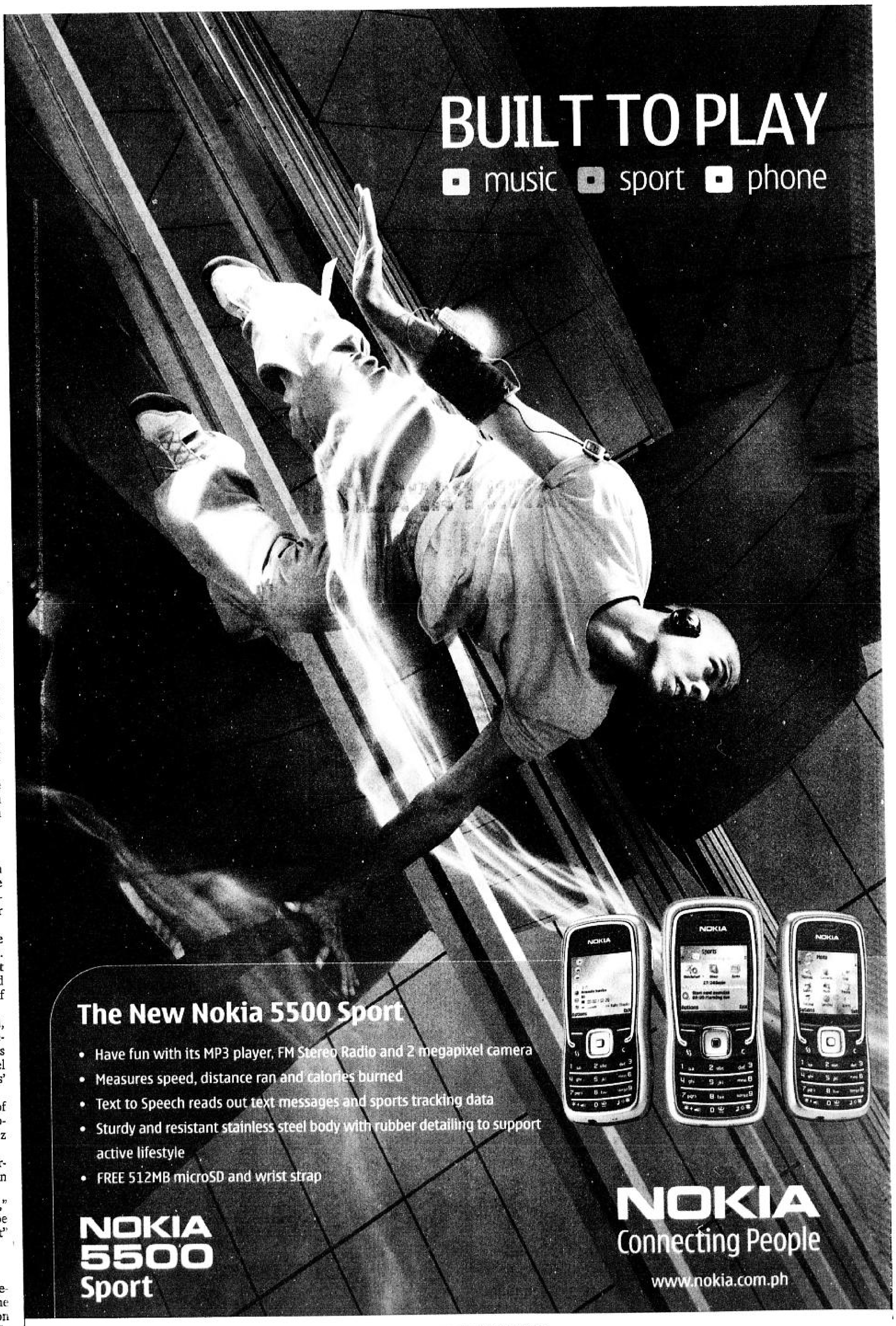
P&I Club covers the Solar I's insurance up to $6 million. The IOPC, meanwhile, can cover damage from the oil spill, including the cleanup, up to $300 million, Cruz said.

He said Petron was the lead agency in the recovery of the remaining oil, assisted by the Department of Transportation and Communication, the Coast Guard, the Department of Energy, backed by the IOPC, the P&I Club and Fukada.



MT SOLAR I captain Norberto Aguro faces criminal charges over the sinking of his ship (left) that now lies at the bottom of the Panay Gulf near Guimaras Island.

AP



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Gov't withdraws plea to lift TRO on Piatco

By Armand N. Nocum

THE GOVERNMENT YESTERDAY WITHDREW its motion to lift the temporary restraining order from the Court of Appeals stopping the expropriation proceedings of the controversial Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

The move is expected to prolong the resolution of the expropriation proceedings over the Naia3, including the payment of the P3 billion initial compensation to Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc. (Piatco).

In yesterday's oral argument before the appellate court, Assistant Solicitor General Marilyn Aturla formally manifested the government's petition to withdraw the motion for the court to lift the TRO, which the CA issued on petition of Ilocos Sur Rep. Salacnib Baterina.

Baterina's lawyer opposed the government's motion to withdraw and argued in open court that the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) had no money to pay Piatco the down payment and the balance, estimated at P17 billion, for the terminal.

Aturla told the court that the Office of the Solicitor General has already filed a petition for certiorari before the Supreme Court essentially assailing the issuance of the TRO stopping the payment of P3 billion to Piatco and as well as suspending the expropriation proceedings of the Naia3 at the Pasay City Court.

But the OSG's move drew opposition from Baterina's lawyer Jose Bernas, who assailed the propriety of the government withdrawing the motion, noting that this constituted "forum shopping" because the issue pending before the CA has not yet been deliberated upon.

"They should have waited for the Court of Appeals to grant their motion to withdraw before they file a petition before the Supreme Court," Bernas said.

The appeals court, however, said it will not act on the motion to withdraw until it was given a copy of the petition filed before the Supreme Court.

Financial capacity questioned

The Court of Appeals had issued the TRO stopping the government from paying the P3-billion profferred amount to Piatco and directed the Judge Jesus Mupas to suspend the expropriation proceedings.

Bernas stressed that the expropriation case should be dismissed and Piatco should not be compensated because it obtained the contract to build Naia3 through fraud and corruption.

Before adjourning the hearing, Justice Renato Dacudao ordered Bernas, the Solicitor General and the lawyers of Piatco to submit their respective memorandum, after which, the case is deemed submitted for resolution.

In yesterday's oral arguments, Bernas questioned the financial capacity of the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa) to pay for the airport terminal. In fact, he said, the Miaa would be insolvent if it decides to pay the P3-billion to Piatco.

"The Miaa has no financial capacity to pay Piatco. How can Miaa pay P17 billion to expropriate Naia3 when its charter says that it can only borrow P5 billion?" Bernas said

Warning that public interest would be prejudiced if government proceeds with the expropriation case, Bernas noted that there exists no certificate on the availability of funds to cover the compensation to Piatco.

Seized barge had 1.8 million liters of used oil

A BARGE INTERCEPTED BY THE PHILIPPINE Coast Guard last week was carrying 1.84 million liters of used oil from Palau, the National Anti-Environmental Crime Task Force (NAECTF) said yesterday.

NAECTF Deputy Director Roy Kyamko said the importer of the used oil—Powerzone Petroleum Products Phils.—had no permit to transport, store or dispose of hazardous materials.

"The importer is not in the list of those authorized by the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) to transport hazardous materials like used oil," Kyamko said in a phone interview.

Kyamko said he had sent a team to examine the documents of the barge, the Cheryll Ann, and its tugboat, the Jacob I. The barge is docked in Surigao City.

"The vessel will stay there until we finish the legal procedures," Kyamko said. The Coast Guard apprehended the vessel last Friday.

Oil for free

Powerzone, which is registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, obtained the huge volume of oil for free from the Palau Public Utility Corp. (PPUC), a power plant in the nearby island-republic.

Initial reports said the PPUC had given the used oil to Powerzone in exchange for the latter cleaning the PPUC's oil containers, Kyamko said.

"They considered the oil [to be] waste," he said.

The NAECTF received a tip the barge from Palau was coming to the Philippines as early as the second week of August. It then alerted the Coast Guard.

"We're sure this was the vessel we'd been watching out for," Kyamko said.

The barge and the tugboat arrived in Surigao City on Aug. 23 and have been held for several violations of maritime and marine pollution regulations, said local Coast Guard chief Cmdr. Gonzalo Magno Jr.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had praised the authorities for "the successful interception of this toxic waste," her spokesperson Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said yesterday.

Magno said the barge and its tugboat stopped at the Surigao port because they were running out of fuel and needed water and other provisions.

He said he ordered the vessels—both Philippine-registered and manned by Filipino crews—not to leave port after finding they did not carry the required oil dispersants and had no garbage and shipboard oil pollution management plans. They also lacked a customs importation permit for the cargo.

Blanche Rivera with an AP report

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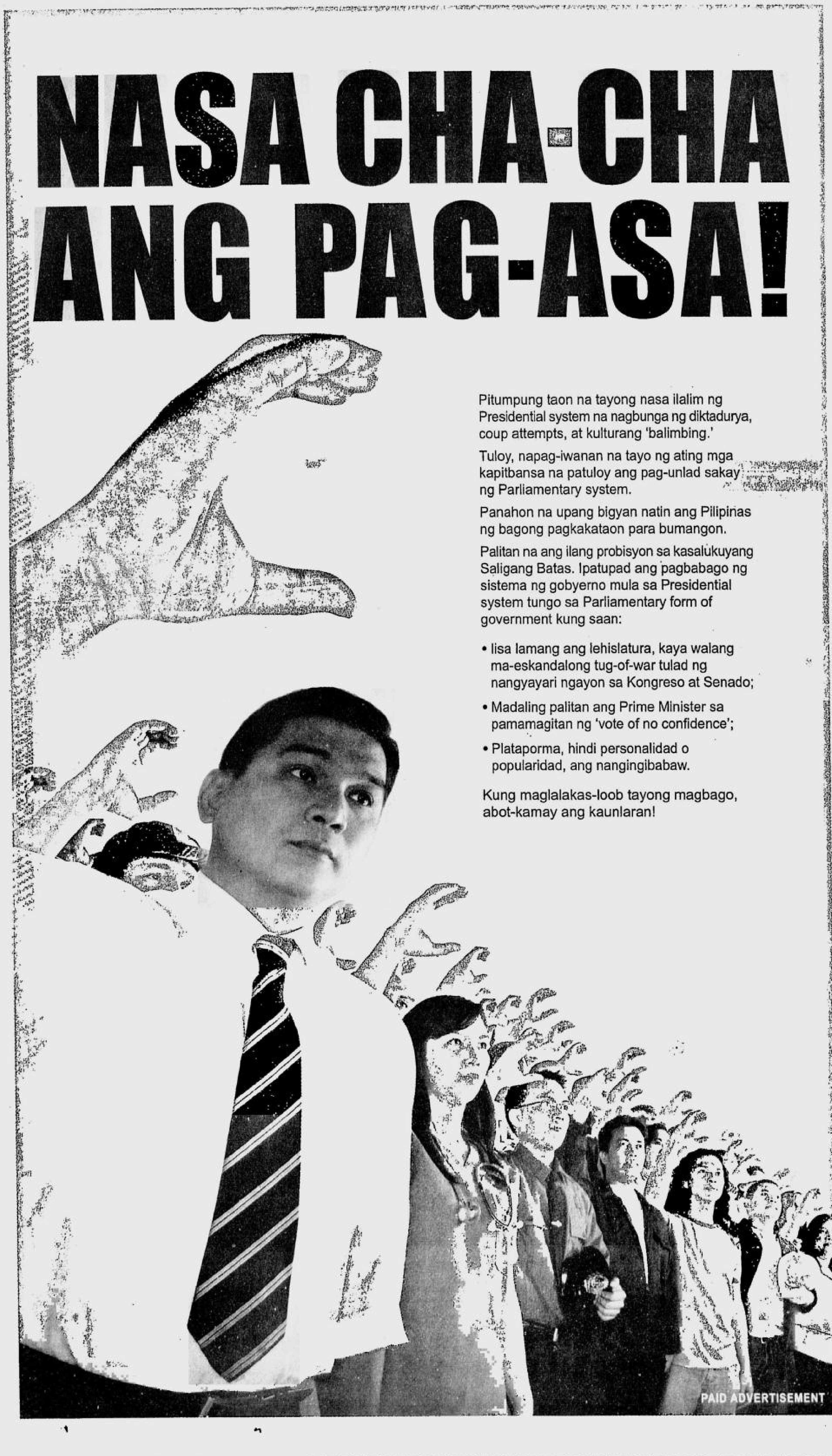

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PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Good people help Cerezo quads face future

From page A1

(BSPS) in Barangay Quirino here.

Life, at the beginning, was difficult for Elizabeth Cerezo, 44, whose husband, Bernard, was murdered in Quezon City a few months after the quadruplets were born on Feb. 16, 1999.

Elizabeth, who has two other children, became the sole breadwinner of the family. She kept her quadruplets in the wooden playpen so she could work.

When the children turned 4, they said they didn't want to stay in a cramped cage and wanted to go to school. Help poured in for the Cerezo quadruplets—from neighbors, local officials, total strangers—and their mother was able to send them to school.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, the quadruplets said they wanted to finish school because they, too, would like to help other people.

According to Mary Jane, she and her siblings realize that not everyone can go to school so they try to spend more time studying than playing.

Four dreams

Mary Jane and Mary Grace said they wanted to become nurses so they could take care of their mother. Mary Rose said she was going to be a teacher while Mary Joy said she would like to be a policewoman.

"I want to arrest criminals," Mary Joy said. "I also want to arrest my father's killer."

The quadruplets agreed on one thing—they don't want to be separated from each other.

"*Gusto namin sama-sama kami at nagtutulungan. Gusto naming tulungan ang nanay namin* (We want to stay together and help each other. We also want to help our mother)," they told the INQUIRER.

Too far

The quadruplets used to attend the Little Pillars Child Formation School (LPCFS), a private school in Solano town, on the sponsorship of former Nueva Vizcaya Board Member Merianthe Zuraek.

But Elizabeth decided to take the quadruplets out of this primary school because the children's daily transportation expenses to Solano, 13 km from here, ate up the budget for the family's other needs.

"I also felt ashamed when they mingled with the rich children. Can you imagine their daily snacks compared to what their classmates brought?" she said.

Two years ago, Elizabeth planned to work as a domestic helper either in Singapore or Hong Kong to improve her family's finances.

Generous offer

But Mahmoud Asfour, a Jordanian philanthropist living in the province, learned of Elizabeth's predicament and offered to finance the quadruplets' schooling.

Elizabeth decided to stay so she could be close to her family. Aside from the quadruplets, she has an older son, Leslie, a third year college student, and another daughter, Mayet, a second year college student.

"It is very difficult to leave my children. They need my presence, attention and guidance more than the money I could send them by working abroad," she said.

To earn money for her children's needs, Elizabeth does household chores for neighbors and helps out farmers in their farms.

Criticism

Occasionally, she would ask other people for help. But when she started getting more criticism than help, Elizabeth decided to be more self-reliant and to work even harder to provide for her family's daily needs.

"I understand their reactions. I know it's difficult to keep providing for other people's needs for a long time," she said.

Fortunately, the quadruplets' teacher, Marie de la Cruz, offered to shoulder the quadruplets' school expenses in exchange for Elizabeth's cleaning services.

"I thank God my children are past the stage of baby-feeding. I no longer worry about their daily supply of milk and vitamins. My problem is where to get medicine when they get sick. Because when one gets sick, the other three will get sick, too," she said.

Staying together

Elizabeth said she was determined to keep her family together.

"We could be in this difficult situation for a long time but I don't care. What's important is that we are together. I want to see them grow up and be there to guide them," she said.

When her husband died, Elizabeth and her six children returned to Nueva Vizcaya and sought assistance from former Rep. Carlos Padilla and local officials.

Padilla opened a savings account for the quadruplets and helped raise funds for them. Former Gov. Rodolfo Agbayani also helped the family build a house in Barangay Quirino here.

Former Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit and officials of the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. and other agencies also extended assistance to the Cerezo family.

Palparan dead man walking, says NPA

From page A1

he said he believed "nobody will harm me because the people will protect me."

Palparan vowed to continue his counterinsurgency campaign after his retirement. "I am not afraid of them. I will not be threatened," he said.

Palparan said about 95 percent of insurgency-affected areas in Central Luzon had been cleared of the control or influence of the NPA, the Communist Party of the Philippines, the National Democratic Front and party-list groups.

Security detail

He said the only areas left for "clearing operations" were the coastal towns of Hagonoy, Paombong, Calumpit and Bulakan in Bulacan, and Masantol, Macabebe and Minalin in Pampanga.

An Army spokesperson said Palparan would continue to have military escorts for some time after his retirement, but dismissed the reported NPA death sentence.

Maj. Ernesto Torres said the security detail was part of Palparan's privileges as a retiring general, and not part of special measures to protect him from reprisal by communist rebels and victims of his draconian counterinsurgency campaign.

"That's expected (of the NPA) since they're hurting (from Palparan's campaign). Of course they'll say that, although we have not seen any official pronouncement," Torres said.

The Army has backed Palparan throughout his controversial counterinsurgency campaign, and has defended him from accusations that he was behind the wave of killings and other abuses on suspected NPA rebels.

Agtalon disputed Palparan's claim that the military was succeeding in its all-out war against the communist rebels.

According to the NPA spokesperson, there were "some casualties" but it was the Armed Forces that lost "more men and war materiel."

TONETTE T OREJAS/INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

I WILL BE A "FREE man walking," says Palparan who retires on Sept. 11.

Military failure

The military's Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom), Agtalon said, had not reported to the media the "successful attacks" of the NPA.

"The all-out war in Central Luzon is an utter military failure," he said.

Militant groups also belittled Palparan's claims of victory.

"His claims are dubious as his medals," said Roman Polintan, chair of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan in Central Luzon.

"The so-called NPA surrenderees are in reality plain civilians or former activists who were bullied, coerced by him and his troops, and forced to admit such out of fear," Polintan said.

He said Bayan would pursue criminal cases against Palparan even after his retirement.

Fernando Hicap, chair of the Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya), said what Palparan had done was to turn the region into the "social volcano capital" of the country by sowing terror and anger among the residents. *With a report from Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

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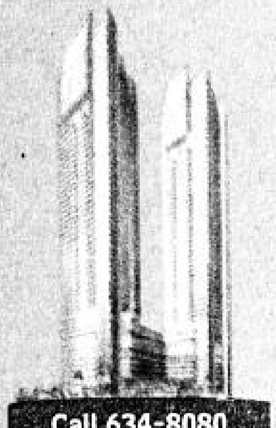
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KMU: Tech-voc courses serve interests of foreign firms

By Jerome Aning

TECHNICAL-VOCATIONAL (tech-voc) courses supply the pool of skilled reserve labor that services multinational firms which transferred the labor-intensive part of their production processes to low-wage countries like the Philippines, the leftist Kilusang Mayo Uno said yesterday.

KMU secretary general Joel Maglunsod said tech-voc graduates usually get jobs as contractuals in assembly lines of automotive, electronics and other foreign-owned manufacturing firms or in export-oriented businesses owned by the local elite classes.

"They are being made to serve the interest of multinational firms in search of cheap skilled labor but are not really helpful in industrializing the country. This is what they're really saying when boasting of tech-voc courses as the way to globalization," Maglunsod said.

The labor leader said the reported "mismatch" in jobs and education was just a symptom of the real problem of job generation.

'Unremitting retrenchment'

"There's a great mismatch because the local economy, continuously plundered by the profiteering of multinational firms and depleted by the rapacious consumption of the local elite classes, remains backward."

According to Maglunsod, there is a continuous employment contraction in the industrial sector. The sector shrunk by 15.72 percent in 2000 and 14.86 percent in 2005, he said.

"The government continuously boasts that there are vacant jobs in industry but hides the fact that there is unremitting retrenchment of regular workers in companies like PLDT, San Miguel Corp. and others pursuing labor contractualization to reduce wage costs," he said.

Moreover, the KMU said, most Filipino students are forced to take tech-voc courses because the domestic educational system is highly commercialized.

"In this country, what's needed is not just for Filipinos to be taught how to tinker with and assemble machines but rather given a comprehensive and excellent education in science, research, engineering and others that would spur industrialization," Maglunsod said.

"As long as the government prioritizes a labor export policy and jobs such as call center operators, assembly line workers and others, the economy will remain backward and will grow more dependent on foreign investors who are plundering the resources that our citizens work hard for," he said.

Wanted: College graduates with dirty hands

From page A1

ber of the labor force almost immediately, according to Yap.

"This is the mainstream form of education in Europe, the tech-voc system," the presidential adviser says. "But here, we seem to have a prejudice against vocational schools. We always say we need a diploma. We do not give importance to tech-voc. But in Europe, tech-voc is the way to go."

The scheme, according to CHEd Commissioner Nona Ricafort, has been adopted by 168 schools and colleges in eight fields—agriculture, education, engineering, information communication technology, nursing, maritime, tourism and criminology.

"The reason we chose these courses is that they are very much in demand for the national and global market," Ricafort says.

Addressing a disconnect

CHEd Deputy Director Julito Vitriolo says there's a disconnect between higher education and business realities. This is what the program seeks to address.

"When the user looks for someone to hire, he is looking for a college graduate who can dirty his hands," Vitriolo says.

But not all education experts are sold on the ladderized education project as it is now conceptualized and implemented.

"The skills being taught in a caregiver course are nothing more than the skills of a domestic helper," says Marilyn Lorenzo, director of the University of the Philippines Institute of Health Policy and Development Studies.

"The skills they learn are mostly how to operate a microwave [oven] or a washing machine."

Indeed, there are areas that need fine-tuning. But a start is being made in introducing educational reforms that give cause for optimism.

For example, newly appointed Education Secretary Jesli Lapus is seriously considering reintroducing the college entrance tests for high school graduates.

In Europe, senior high school students have to pass the baccalaureate or maturite in order to go to university. If they don't, they enter vocational schools.

Not in the Philippines. Any so-called diploma mill has a slot for anyone who can shell out the required tuition and attend any course desired.

Decongest popular courses

Lapus wants to discourage such a practice.

In addition to college entrance tests, he sees a need to decongest courses that seem to be very popular, like law, liberal arts and business management.

"Those courses that are oversubscribed, you raise the tuition. Courses that you encourage, like math and science, you lower tuition fees, offer scholarships," Lapus says.

JEWELRY-MAKING. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Emerico de Guzman, president of the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines, says that there are many opportunities for qualified—even if inexperienced—people in the workplace.

"There appears to be a divergence of skills and competencies that people in business want versus what the graduates right now offer," De Guzman says.

A recent PMAP survey among its more than 1,000 members nationwide showed that most job applicants have poor communication skills, particularly in spoken and written English.

Fresh graduates also lack confidence, impact and analytical thinking—points against them during job interviews. These qualities, according to De Guzman, are generally sought by human resources managers from both university and tech-voc graduates.

De Guzman himself has encountered a handful of law graduates who did not quite meet the communication skills expected from would-be lawyers.

On the flip side, new graduates also have "unreasonable expectations" from companies hiring them, especially in terms of compensation and work assignments, according to De Guzman.

In short, many job seekers from elite schools are picky, seemingly forgetting that companies are guided by a rigid set of competencies and qualities.

Graduates of tech-voc courses can easily find jobs. Once employed, however, they find it a little difficult to get promoted. Given equal skills, an employee with a regular college degree has a better chance at career advancement.

Valentino Santos Jr. 33, a product of the Meralco Foundation Inc. (MFI) vocational school, found this out to his dismay. "If you're an engineer, or a graduate of a four-year course, the company bosses regard you highly," he says.

After graduating in the late 1990s, Santos was immediately employed by a Japanese car manufacturing company as a data general line operator. He quit after he had saved enough money to set up his own fleet of taxis.

Frustration of graduates

Manolo Santos, MFI assistant vice president for technical education, says that the frustration of Valentino Santos (no relation) seems evident among the 2,000 or so graduates that the MFI has produced since it began its training school in 1983.

"Sometimes, our graduates would come here and say 'Sir, there's a position available, there's a need for an engineer. My boss told me I can do the job but they need the paper'," the MFI official says, referring to a university diploma.

To address this concern, Manolo Santos says MFI entered into an agreement with the Technological University of the Philippines (TUP) last year that hews to the government's ladderized program. TUP will credit the units completed by a student at MFI.

Once the investment holding company of Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), MFI eventually became the company's social arm. Applicants go through a rigorous screening. The 150 applicants selected mostly come from poor families who cannot afford a college education.

Through the years, the MFI training school has gained a high reputation, offering such courses as ICT, instrumentation, electrical technology, electronics, tool and die. It has more than 60 clients, as well as on-the-job training companies.

High-tech products

"We practically train their future employees," says MFI president Alexander Escano. "We meet regularly and they tell us their needs, the skills they are looking for, and we tailor-fit."

MOOG, an international company in Baguio that manufactures Boeing parts using sensitive and high precision machinery, has practically turned MFI into a training ground for its future employees.

Escano says the MFI program is very much like those of tech-voc schools in European countries.

"Once you are skilled, you can be employed, you can do your own work and you can earn to put yourself through college, if you are really capable of earning a college degree," he says.

"The mere fact that we launched the ladderized education is giving recognition to that." *With reports from Leila B. Salaverria, Jerome Aning and Alcuin Papa*

'Prophet of boom' sees salvation in GoNegosyo

From page A1

boom." He believes that there is an entrepreneur in every Filipino. The skill just needs to be nurtured and brought to the fore, according to him.

Potential business people also need to be inspired, he adds, for them to believe that they can run their own businesses as long as they have a great idea, passion and grim determination to turn that vision into reality.

Providing that inspiration is the message behind the series of successful "GoNegosyo summits" that Concepcion and the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship have been organizing.

Wives and OFWs

GoNegosyo has already done the rounds of military wives and overseas Filipino workers and their families, and has covered topics such as micro-, small- and medium-enterprises.

Its latest run was a school edition held in Baguio City, which was attended by over 2,000 teachers, 70 percent of whom came from the public schools, and their students.

"They may not all become entrepreneurs, but at least they are now aware of the possibilities that entrepreneurship presents," Concepcion says.

Concepcion says his group is also working with the Department of Education and some of the country's top schools on the possibility of teaching entrepreneurship subjects.

Quickest way

"We want teachers and students to have a better understanding of entrepreneurship, perhaps include it in the academic curriculum as early as high school," he said.

Behind these efforts is the belief that creating more entrepreneurs is one of the quickest ways to create jobs.

The potential is there, Concepcion says. He is already working on a GoNegosyo summit on information technology and ecotourism, and plans to stage similar events in the provinces to get more people to jump on the entrepreneurship bandwagon.

"For every entrepreneur that will go into business, he or she will provide employment for at least two more people," he says, "even more as they grow."

A similar message is being spread by Smart Communications Co., the country's largest mobile phone company, through its Smart Entrepreneurial Program (SEP). The SEP has been to many colleges and universities nationwide, providing students with key insights into business opportunities.

Launched in 2004, SEP promotes entrepreneurship as an economically viable activity that will generate jobs downstream. Experts and successful businessmen are enlisted to talk to graduating students and unemployed individuals.

Smart believes that the continued growth and success of small- and medium-scale enterprises can lead to a strong and stable economy. Through SEP, it wants students to realize that there is an alternative to the lack of employment.

As Smart president and CEO Napoleon Nazareno puts it: "Going into your own business means taking charge of your life. Know yourself and pursue your goals with a passion."

Don Bosco's tech-voc program pays off

From page A1

initiative catered primarily to out-of-school youth, but eventually welcomed poor boys across the country.

The Salesian priests first thought of establishing the center to provide alternative courses for the graduates of the Don Bosco Technical Institute (DBTI) who could not afford to go to college, San Pedro says.

It was also at this time that skilled workers were badly needed in various industries.

Tough times

Leander, the third of four children, stopped his schooling at the Technological University of the Philippines in 2003 to give way to his eldest sister, who was then in her senior year of college.

Leander's father died a few years ago, while his mother worked as an agriculturist in their town in Quezon. Times were tough and he had to help with the household chores.

Last year, an uncle heard about the Don Bosco MSTC in Makati City and encouraged Leander to try his luck. After undergoing rigorous screening plus getting the prescribed haircut, which he said had turned off other aspiring young men, he was accepted.

Leander is now on his 12th month in the program, awaiting on-the-job training as a fitter machinist.

Under a "study now, pay later" scheme at the MSTC, young men aged 17 to 24 are offered a 15-month training in automotive mechanics, fitter machinery, industrial electronics, ship mechanics, refrigeration and aircon technology.

For two semesters, 70 percent of the time is dedicated to laboratory and shop work and the rest is devoted to theory and values formation.

On-the-job training

In the last five months of the program, students undergo on-the-job training in the center's partner companies, including General Motors, Ford Philippines, Honda Motorcycles and Toyota Motor Philippines.

These companies provide the needed equipment and machinery during the training period.

"It's like the center produces their future workers. That's how the center tries to close the gap in the employment mismatch in our country," San Pedro says, noting that yearly, 85 percent of their students land appropriate jobs after finishing their vocational courses.

In 2002, MSTC started providing nonformal education on Saturdays to enrollees who were not able to complete their elementary and high school education to give them a better chance at promotion.

Skills honed at early age

Many high school graduates from Don Bosco have also enrolled in vocational courses offered by the center.

"Some of them could not continue with their college education because of poverty. So what they do is take up technical-vocational courses first and enroll in engineering courses later," San Pedro explains.

The technical skills of Don Bosco students are honed at an early age. Mena Enore, head of DBTI institutional affairs, says as early as Grade 3, students do manual projects, like assembling objects out of cardboard and paper, using correct measurements.

Grade 4 students are taught how to use hand tools, while Grade 5 students are introduced to their first formal shop work.

Before the students enter high school, a diagnostic test is administered to gauge their preparedness for a technical curriculum, Enore says.

"When their test results are below average, we call their parents and we discuss the possibility of putting the student on a purely academic high school curriculum," she says.

DBTI has an academic curriculum, as mandated by the Department of Education, and a technical curriculum, which "is the peculiarity of all Don Bosco schools," Enore says.

Skills training

Freshmen take up industrial drafting, electronics, electrical technology, computer, mechanical and automotive technology. Upon reaching third year, students are classified according to their specialization.

Enore says students are evaluated as second-class technicians according to a test carried out by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority. They can easily get a job when they finish high school.

The school's technical curriculum assures this.

"Car production and repair will continue amid fuel hikes and oil crises. Buildings will continue to rise and they will need maintenance. Our students will always have a place in industry," Enore says.

Machos, say a prayer for poor male mantises

From page A1

mantis approaches a female, flapping his wings and swaying his abdomen.

Leaping on her back, he begins to mate. And quite often, she tears off his head.

The female mantis devours the head of the still-mating male and then moves on to the rest of his body. "If you put a pair together and come back later, you'll just find the wings of the male and no other evidence he was ever there," said William Brown, an evolutionary biologist at the State University of New York in Fredonia.

Sexual cannibalism has fascinated biologists ever since Darwin. It is not limited to mantises, but is also found in other invertebrates, including spiders, midges (mosquito-like flies) and perhaps horned nudibranchs (sea slugs).

Biologists have debated how this behavior has evolved in these species. Some have suggested that sexual cannibalism is just a result of a voracious female appetite.

But experiments have also suggested that it is a strategy that females use to select the best fathers for their offspring.

Other scientists have found evidence that males may have had a role in the evolution of cannibalism. By surrendering themselves to their mates, males increase their reproductive success.

Still other scientists have proposed that males actually go to great lengths to minimize their risk of being eaten.

As scientists look more closely at sexual cannibalism in many species, the emerging consensus is that all of these theories may be right. Different evolutionary pressures produce sexual cannibalism in different species.

"It's not something that lends itself to a single, simple explanation," said Mark Elgar of the University of Melbourne.

Other scientists have demonstrated that males can increase their chances of passing on their genes if they cooperate in their own death.

Some scientists are now investigating what sort of evolutionary pressures cause males to go along with their own demise.

In some species, males have very few opportunities to mate, while each female may mate with multiple males.

For these desperate males, the benefits of sacrificing themselves may outweigh the loss of future opportunities to mate.

Andrade describes the strategy this way: "If you don't have any other shot at it, do what you can now." *New York Times News Service*

Senators stand by Cha-cha position

By TJ Burgonio

IN THE FACE OF THE COMMITTEE approval of a House resolution for a constituent assembly to approve constitutional amendments, several senators said they were standing by a March 21 Senate resolution stating that any amendments through a constituent assembly should be approved by both chambers voting separately.

Sen. Joker Arroyo said it was understandable that Charter change proponents would rush the approval of the House resolution "because time is not on their side."

"I think that they wanted the public to dispose of it one or the other even if they turn it down for so long as they can go up immediately to the Supreme Court," he said.

Arroyo expressed confidence that the Supreme Court would uphold the Senate's position on the issue.

Article 17 of the Constitution provides that "the Congress, upon a vote of three-fourths of all its members" is one of the modes by which constitutional change can be effected.

The House majority claims that this means the Congress voting as one and is behind the House leadership's claim that the lower chamber can go it alone in Charter change.

Most senators strongly oppose this position, insisting that the Constitution provides for separate voting.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. warned the House that it was "going on a suicidal course" by insisting that it could go it alone in a constituent assembly.

"The House cannot impose its will on the Senate," he said in a statement.

The word "Congress" meant the Senate and the House, which by tradition voted separately on "everything that needs their action," he said.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said the prevailing consensus in the chamber was for a constitutional convention, citing a Senate resolution passed more than a year ago expressing preference for that mode of amending the Charter.

With a report from Norman Bordadora

House body OKs cha-cha via con-ass

By Michael Lim Ubac

WASTING NO TIME, THE HOUSE COMMITTEE on constitutional amendments yesterday swiftly approved House Resolution No. 1230 seeking to convene the whole Congress into a constituent assembly that would approve changes to the Constitution.

"The motion was approved overwhelmingly. This is not my triumph but the triumph of the committee and the Filipino people," declared Cagayan de Oro City Rep. Constantino Jaraula, the committee chair.

Jaraula, Speaker Jose de Venecia and Majority Leader Prospero Nograles were among the principal authors of the resolution.

But the seven minority members of the committee said the fight was not over yet, and the majority should expect from them stiff opposition during plenary debate.

They accused the House leadership of railroading the process to speed up Charter change and the shift of the form of government to a parliamentary system.

"We witnessed one of the lowest points in the history of the House on a matter of highest import which is amendment to, or revision of, the Constitution," said opposition Rep. Roilo Golez.

With a vote of 30 to 7, the committee adopted in toto the Charter change resolution that proposes to overhaul the nation's fundamental law to lift economic restrictions and abolish the presidential-bicameral system.

De Venecia claimed that the "obsolete" presidential-bicameral system has created endless political gridlock and obstructed the nation's progress.

The committee also voted to approve in principle the committee report to be presented to the plenary next week.

The committee vote came a day after Nograles himself announced that the 204 signatures of House members supporting a constituent assembly had been obtained.

De Venecia insisted that a constituent assembly was possible, even without the Senate's participation, citing Article 17, Section 1, of the Constitution, which states that "Congress, upon a vote of three-fourths of all its members, may propose to change the Charter."

Jaraula presided over a tumultuous two-hour public hearing that ended on a high note for the majority which had decided to fast-track approval of the resolution after the Commission on Elections last Thursday threw out a petition for a people's initiative to amend the Constitution.

Golez said the committee had spent not even one minute to discuss the substance of the proposed amendments although the panel had debated for two hours on other procedural matters.

"It's a disgrace, it's a shame on us. We witnessed not a railroad but a bullet train driven by powerful hands," said Golez.

Party-list Rep. Liza Maza said "railroad" was not the proper term. "It was a supersonic jet that destroyed everything on its path, including the House rules," she said.

Nograles said the committee was not a "railroad or a bullet train," and that the opposition was beginning to sound like "a broken record."

"They keep repeating the same things and arguments off session, on the air, in Congress journals. It's time to close the debates and vote," he said. *With a report from Christine Avendaño*

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Officials say security expert a braggart

A BOMB-SNIFFING dog checks a bag left by a passenger at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Monday. Security at the airport has been tightened following report of a breach in security. JESS YUSON

From page A1

port security confirmed the expert did indeed fly to Davao on Aug. 14 but said his claim that he was able to get past airport security while carrying bomb components was not true.

The denials were issued by officials who had been embarrassed by the man's story, and came a day after Malacañang said that Ms Arroyo planned to meet with the expert to discuss security measures.

Earlier, PNP Director General Oscar Calderon said the man's claim that he was able to breach airport security undetected was "an eye-opener" and should spur a thorough security review.

"It's not true that there was a test on security that was conducted. It's not true that what was brought on board were explosives or dangerous materials," airport chief Alfonso Cusi said at the Bulong Pulungan forum.

Cusi denied reports that Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, the presidential adviser on antiterrorism, had authorized the test, which the expert said he carried out on a flight from Manila to Davao, and back.

Cusi's denial followed a meeting with Duterte on Monday night. Investigation showed the man had gone to Davao on Duterte's invitation to conduct a security training among members of the PNP Aviation Security Group.

In the story he told journalist Arlyn dela Cruz, which the INQUIRER published, the expert who carried out the test asked that he not be identified.

Cusi and other aviation officials yesterday identified the man at the center of their investigation as Samson Macariola. Two major local television networks also aired the man's name.

No questions asked

Officials said the supposed bomb components the expert brought aboard the plane were his training materials for the Davao seminar and these included clay, a detonator and a video.

Asked if the airport security people did not question the man about the materials he was carrying, Cusi said: "What I would assume is that when he went through security, he was checked and frisked and he passed. I would assume that nothing was found to be unsafe and he was allowed to board."

Cusi said that, during the training, the expert wanted to "create the impression" that he was able to carry real explosives on board "to get the attention of the participants."

"If I may quote the mayor, he said we really have to dig into his mind and find out his motive," Cusi said.

More questions

Cusi's and the other security officials' vehement denials that there had been an airport security breach seemed to raise more questions.

If the man's story was a hoax, as the police claimed, why is Ms Arroyo planning to meet with him, as announced by Presidential Chief of Staff Mike Defensor?

Asked about it, Cusi said he was not aware of the planned meeting.

Cusi's denial that the man had conducted an airport security test also contradicted Duterte's own admission to reporters that the expert had indeed carried out a test except that he used only dummy materials, like clay.

No hand

In an interview with a Davao newspaper, Duterte also said he could not give any other details and that a full explanation needed to be cleared with "the highest authority."

Asked about Duterte's remarks, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said that Malacañang was "leaving all these questions to the security establishment."

"As far as I know, Malacañang had no hand in (this)," Bunye said.

Chief Supt. Andres Caro, ASG director, told the INQUIRER that police would pursue their investigation to establish the expert's motive.

"We want to find out if there could be professional gain or just malice on his part," Caro said.

Man is worried

Caro also said he had spoken on the phone with the man whom he identified as Macariola. He claimed the man sounded "worried" and insisted that he had only carried training materials with him.

"There was no categorical statement from him that he did not conduct the security test. He said he had to clear it first with the mayor," Caro said, referring to Duterte.

Caro said Duterte denied commissioning Macariola to do a security test at the airports.

ASG deputy chief Senior Supt. Edwin Corvera said there had been no security breach at the airports and called the man's story "a hoax, a false report."

He said the police were "confident" about security procedures at the terminals.

Corvera described the expert as a firearms and security expert and a consultant to Duterte.

Corvera confirmed that the expert on Aug. 14 held a demonstration for airport security personnel in Davao.

Man was bragging

In that seminar, he "bragged" that he was an expert and "he can elude or evade security systems and introduce improvised explosives into aircraft and was able to infiltrate airport security," Corvera said.

"He wanted to demonstrate that it's possible that terrorists can introduce a bomb on board without being detected. But, actually, it did not happen," said Corvera.

"He was just bragging that he went through a security screening. But it was probably misinterpreted by media as a security breach."

Corvera claimed the man's statements were meant to "shock the seminar participants and make them more attentive."

Officials in Davao claimed that the expert, whom they also identified as Macariola, was their consultant on marksmanship and sniping.

"He was our lecturer regarding guns, ammunition and explosives," said Col. Eduardo del Rosario, Task Force Davao commander.

Senior Insp. Reynaldo Denila of the Special Anti-Terrorist Unit said the man whom he called Macariola gave lectures on explosives to Davao policemen and soldiers but the materials he gave "can be sourced even from the Internet or books."

He said Macariola was able to get past airport security "because he is known among policemen."

Asked for comment about the investigation results announced by airport security officials, Airline Operators Council (AOC) vice chair Ed Monreal said: "If that's what their findings are, that relieves the undue pressure we're feeling now, especially for travelers."

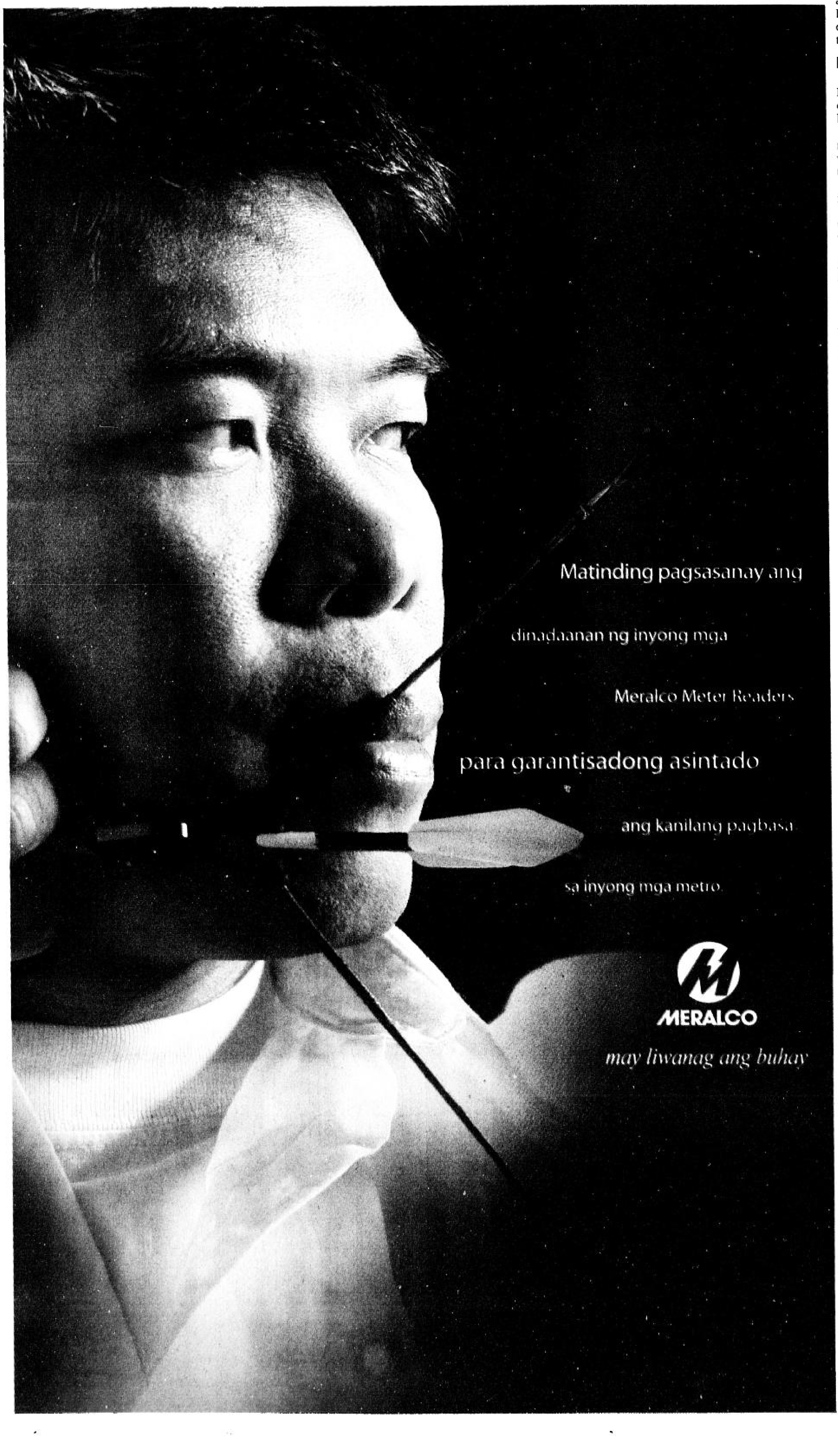
Question remains

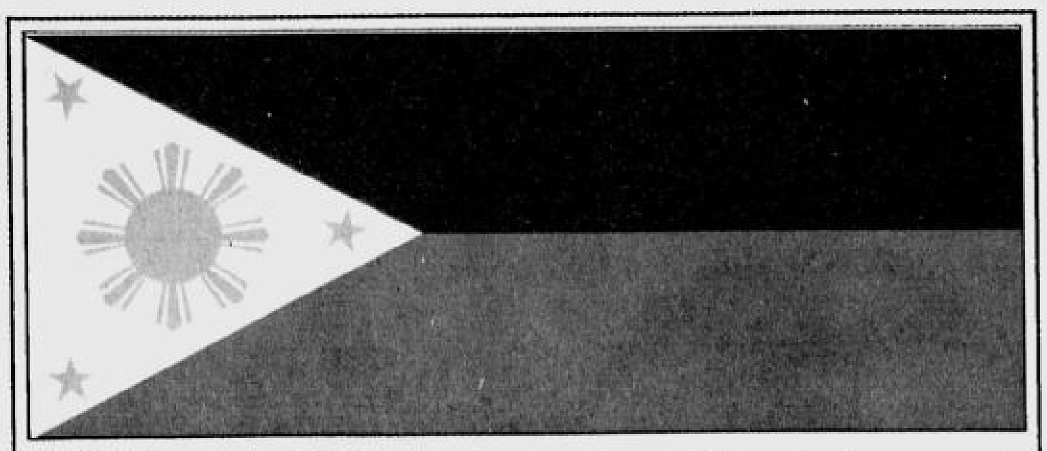
Monreal said the question that remained for him was: "The point is why this thing came out, *ano ba talaga* (what's it really about)?"

"If it's an authorized security audit, it is only fair for all agencies concerned to be notified, especially the airlines, because they would be using the metal of the airlines," Monreal said.

"If it's true that there was a live explosive used, that's a bit different," he added.

Based on the national civil aviation program, live explosives are prohibited on aircraft, Monreal said. *With a report from Alcuin Papa and Dennis Jay C. Santos, Inquirer Mindanao*





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President

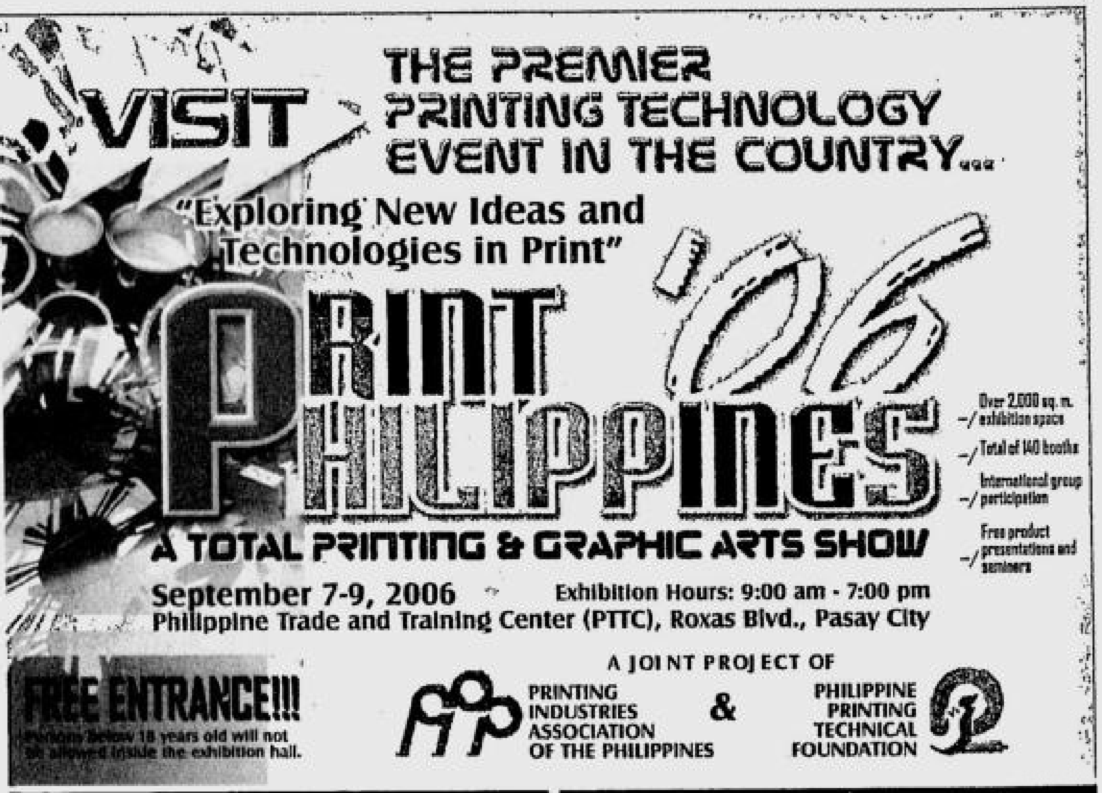
Our warmest greetings to the Printing Industries Association of the Philippines, Inc. (PIAP) and the Philippine Printing Technical Foundation, Inc. (PPTF) as you jointly initiate Print Philippines '06 at the Philippine Trade Training Center on 07-09 September 2006.

It is heartening to note that the PIAP and PPTF are pursuing this initiative for the second time - which promises to be even bigger than its inaugural or maiden staging last year. The show's theme - "Exploring New Ideas and Technologies in Print" is an appropriate and timely choice as world printing technologies are developing very rapidly and printing processes are also increasingly being integrated and [illegible] with IT and digital graphic arts technology to achieve higher levels of quality, efficiency and productivity. Indeed, the local printing industry must be on its toes to catch up or keep apace with its foreign counterparts. To be left behind would be most unfortunate as this would cost them lucrative demand opportunities from overseas markets.

In this daunting task, the unity of the two pillar organizations in the Philippine printing landscape is imperative and no doubt the right step in the right direction. The collaboration and teamwork between PIAP and PPTF in staging Print Philippines '06 reflects and reinforces the commitment of the two organizations in pursuing common goals - not only to showcase the latest technology on graphic arts and printing machines towards helping Filipino printers keep pace with our neighboring countries and maintain the sector's competitive edge in the global market, but also to promote the Philippine printing industry as a major contributor to the growth and vitality of the Philippine economy.

With PIAP and PPTF working creatively in cooperative and partnership undertakings, I am confident that the Philippine printing industry will continue to move forward and attain its goal of becoming the preferred supplier of outsourced printing services in the world - thus reaffirming once again the Filipino's excellence in the world market. To PIAP and PPTF, our sincere congratulations, and may your partnership succeed and prosper.

PETER B. FAVILA
Secretary



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September 7-9, 2006 Exhibition Hours: 9:00 am - 7:00 pm
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PRINTING INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES & PHILIPPINE PRINTING TECHNICAL FOUNDATION

PRINT PHILIPPINES '06 - SEMINAR TOPICS

Day 1 – September 7, 2006 (Thursday)

1:00 – 2:30 pm "Maximizing Efficiency in Print Buying"
Resource Speaker: Mr. Wilfredo Ileto
President, B & W Commercial

2:30 – 4:00 pm "Walking Through The Windows of Workflow" (***)
Resource Speaker: Mr. Jeffrey Protheroe
Director, WFIJ & WPE – INSEAN

4:00 – 5:30 pm "Production Planning & Control in the Printshop"
Resource Speaker: Mr. Paulito D. Maskariño
President & General Manager
PDM Press, Inc.

Day 2 – September 8, 2006 (Friday)

10:30 – 12:00 noon "The Bizhub Color Series for On-Demand Short-Run Color Printing" (***)
Resource Speaker: Mr. Francis Yu
Product Manager
U-BIX Corporation

1:00 – 2:30 pm "Effective Way of Cost Estimating"
Resource Speaker: Mr. Bernabe A. Kitane II
Print Industry Consultant

2:30 – 4:00 pm "Press Standardization"
Resource Speaker: Mr. Adrian Lilonjua
Product Manager
Heidelberg Philippines Inc.

4:00 – 5:30 pm "Mastering Colors in Photoshop"
Resource Speaker: Mr. Jun Miranda
Philippine Center for Creative Imaging

5:30 – 7:00 pm "All About Inks"
Resource Speaker: Mr. Erlito R. Dimaano
CDI Sakata Inx Corporation

Day 3 – September 9, 2006 (Saturday)

9:00 – 10:30 am "Addressing Print Quality Issues"
Resource Speaker: Mr. Michael Crisologo
Globis, Inc.

10:30 – 12:00 noon "Digital Book Printing & Publishing"
Resource Speaker: Mr. Ricky Muñoz
Consultant, Fuji Xerox Phils. Inc.

1:00 – 2:30 pm "Advanced Masking Techniques"
Resource Speaker: Mr. Jun Miranda
Philippine Center for Creative Imaging

2:30 – 4:00 pm "All About Paper"
Resource Speaker: Mr. Muhammad Adjidarmo
Asia Pulp & Paper Co., Ltd.

4:00 – 5:30 pm "Color Management & Printing in Photoshop"
Resource Speaker: Mr. Jun Miranda
Philippine Center for Creative Imaging

LIST OF EXHIBITORS

01. Associated Swedish Steels Phils., Inc.
02. ATI/TGRAF
03. Big Pix Graphics, Inc.
04. Book Media
05. Bughaw Electro-Carbon
06. Canon Marketing Phils.
07. Central Group of Companies
08. CDI Sakata Inx Corp.
09. Chase Technologies
10. CGK Formaprint, Inc.
11. Citibind
12. Computer Graphic Inc.
13. Copylandia
14. Cosmic Sign
15. Epson Phils.
16. Great Seal Packaging
17. Filseri
18. Fuji Xerox
19. GMP Phils
20. Globis Inc.
21. HP Phils.
22. Ideal Mktg. & Mfg., Corp.
23. Infinite Labels Corp.
24. IMA VISION
25. McGraphics Carranz
26. Maschinteck
27. Multistiq
28. Newspaper Paraphernalia
29. Norde International
30. Prestige Paper
31. Printway Marketing
32. Phil. Vacuum
33. Philgada
34. Secomp, Inc.
35. Convertpack Technologies Corp.
36. UBIX Corp.
37. VECO Paper
38. Ynzal Marketing.PCCI
39. PIAP
40. PPTF
41. Cityneon
42. CITIBANK

Seminar registration is on a first-come, first served basis and limited to 60 slots. For those interested, please fill up the attached slip and fax to the PIAP Secretariat (Fax #894-5224) or the PPTF Secretariat (Fax #713-0905).

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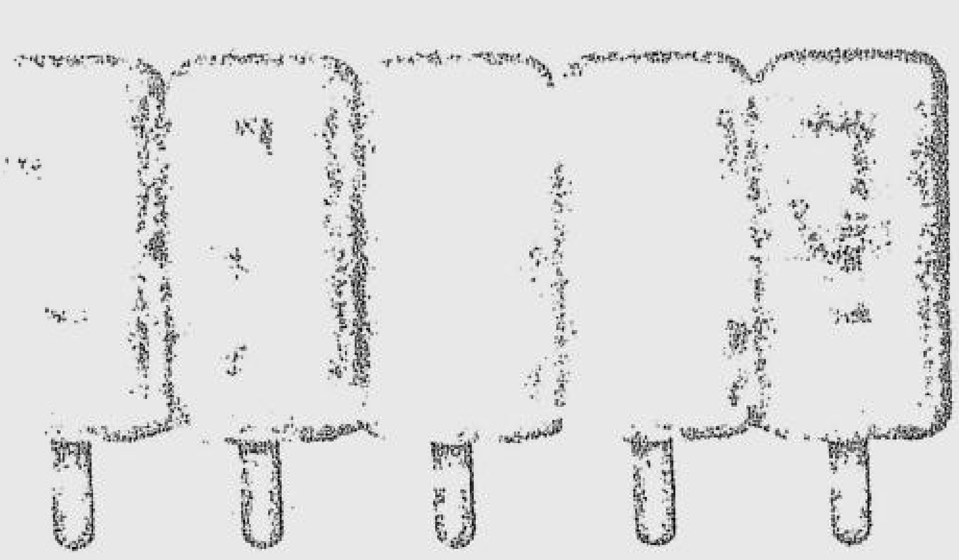

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OPINION

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End of a dream

Editorial

WHEN ELMER REYES JACINTO ANNOUNCED that he was leaving the country two years ago, he became the poster boy not only for the overseas Filipino workers but also for everything that ails the Philippine health care system: The lack of opportunities for professional growth in the medical field. The meager material rewards for health professionals. The mass exodus of health care workers that has forced dozens of hospitals to close and left many others with skeletal workforces. The thousands of doctors opting to swallow the bitter pill of going back to school to study nursing so that they can work abroad as nurses and earn many times more than what they could ever dream of as doctors practicing in the Philippines.

Jacinto was already a nurse when he studied to be a doctor and then decided to work as a nurse again. A cum laude graduate in nursing, he went on to finish medicine magna cum laude at Our Lady of Fatima University and capped his academic achievements by placing first in the medical board exams in February 2004. That would have given him a big edge over the rest of the field had he chosen to stay and train or work here, but to him that was not enough incentive to stay, train and work in his county. The grass looked greener in the land of the greenback, and that was where he wanted to go at the first opportunity.

Right after he took his oath as a doctor, he announced that he was leaving and that, in fact, he had already applied for a nursing job in the United States. He talked about earning a monthly salary equivalent to "six digits" when converted to pesos, just like his old classmates who had settled there. He had no regrets about his decision, he said, because he had already contributed his share of serving the public when he worked as a nurse in his home province of Basilan. "It's time I served myself," he declared.

Jacinto's American dream ended the moment he arrived in America. And so did the dream of 27 others, most of them licensed doctors who took nursing jobs. They got their six-digit salaries all right, but not quite the big bucks they had dreamed about or even the rate—ranging from $21 to $35 an hour—they had been promised by the recruitment agency. They did not receive other benefits specified in their employment contracts—from the airfare from Manila to New York to the relocation and housing allowances, to free malpractice insurance and pay differential for night duty. And they complain of being overworked, with many of them being required to attend to 35 patients round the clock, when the ideal ratio is six patients to one nurse. Now many of them are probably dreaming of home in what their lawyers described as "leaking abandoned houses."

Jacinto and his colleagues have sought the intervention of authorities, both in the Philippines and in the United States, so they could be relieved of their obligations under the contracts whose terms their employers violated. Apparently, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration found their complaints meritorious and suspended the license of the firm that recruited them—Sentosa Recruitment Agency—last May.

One month later, the POEA lifted the suspension. Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the POEA had been pressured to lift the suspension by Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor. In addition, Pimentel said, Defensor directed the Philippine consul in New York, Cecilia Rebong, to persuade the nurses to "back off." Pimentel asked rhetorically: How could a top government official "have the gall to act in a manner that in effect obstructs the interest of justice and causes prejudice to the interest of the people he is sworn to serve?"

Defensor has denied the charge, saying he called the POEA to only find out why it had suspended Sentosa's license. A case should have been filed against the recruitment firm before the POEA issued its suspension order, he said.

Defensor is pretending he doesn't know what power he wields as a Palace official. If asking POEA officials to explain their decision is not pressure, then those officials must be a very panicky lot to reverse the suspension order.

Now Sentosa seems to have gotten away with a serious breach of contract, and Jacinto and his 27 colleagues may have to seek redress for their grievances with US authorities. As far as the Arroyo administration is concerned, they are on their own now. That's probably another reason overseas workers are called heroes of the republic: they have to fight their own battles.

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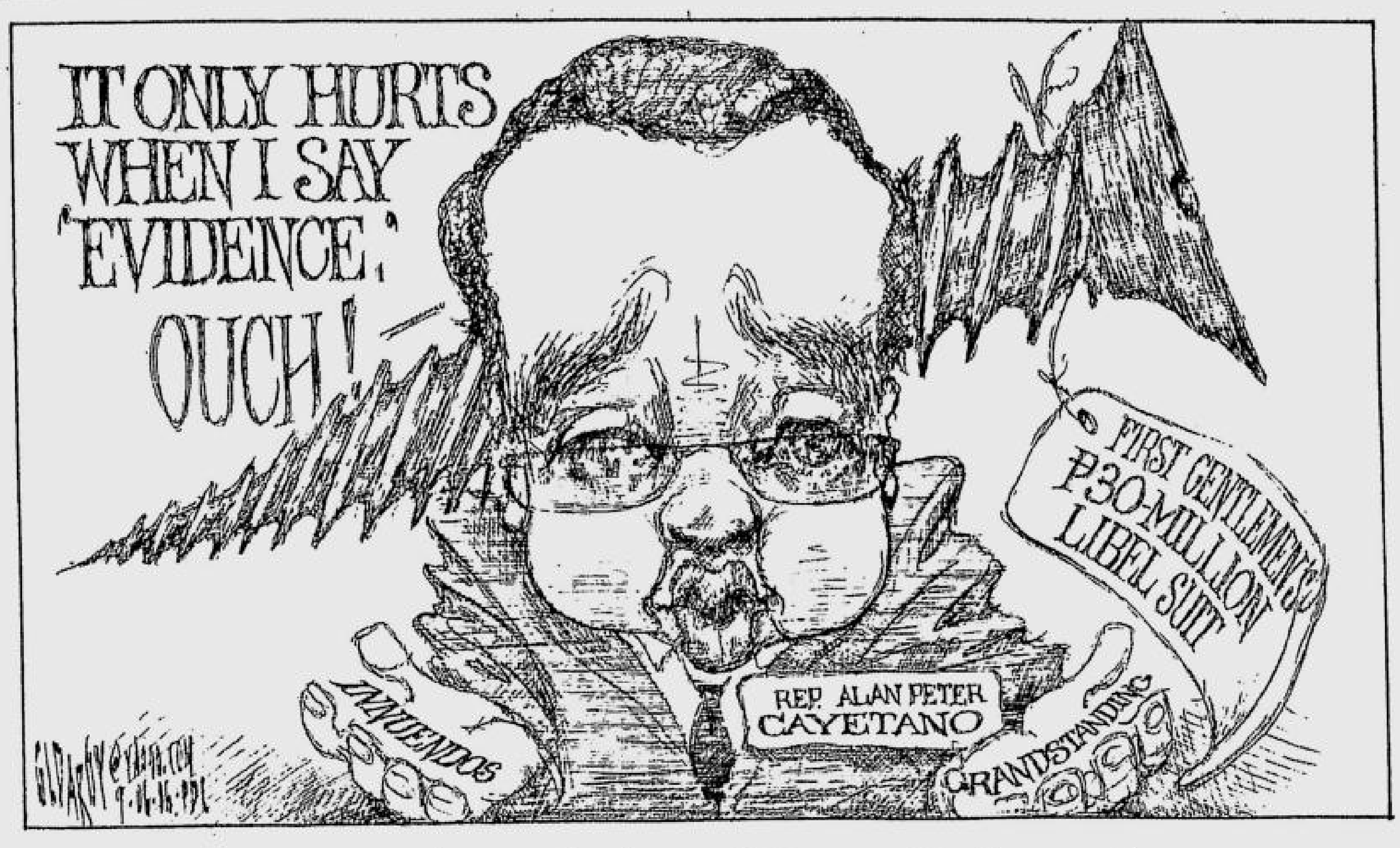
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The real culprit behind Poro Point takeover

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS been accused of being too slow to act on official business. It is notorious for having the longest red tape in the world. But sometimes, with the right incentives, it can act with too much haste, resulting in more waste.

This is what happened at the Poro Point seaport which was taken over, hastily and forcibly, by the government from its legal operator, the Poro Point Industrial Corp. (PPIC). The takeover resulted in the disruption of business in Northern Luzon and the loss of hundreds of millions of pesos for businessmen who could not bring out their shipments from the seaport, for the port operators, for the the workers and for the government agencies themselves.

It is a good thing that the Court of Appeals has stopped the government from taking over and closing the port.

The mess is being blamed on Ilocos Sur Gov. Chavit Singson. But the real culprit is the regional director of the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. He was too fast. This is what happened:

1. On July 25, 2006, Felix Singson Racadio (a cousin of Governor Chavit), president of the Poro Point Management Corp. (PPMC), wrote a letter to the DENR requesting a cease-and-desist-order (CDO) against the very company of which it is a partner, the PPIC. (The other partner is the Bases Conversion and Development Authority). The request was based on alleged environmental infractions that Mayor Maryjane Ortega of San Fernando, La Union, in a letter-complaint, accused the PPIC of. The Racadio letter was received by the office of the DENR secretary at 12:20 p.m. of July 25, 2006.

2. On the very same day, just a few hours after the letter-request was received, DENR Regional Director Joel Salvador issued the CDO.

3. What is even more strange is that the letter-complaint of Mayor Ortega was received by the DENR only on Aug. 1, 2006, five days after Racadio asked for a CDO allegedly because of a complaint he obviously had not yet received. In other words, the CDO was issued by Salvador before there was any complaint. Such speed.

People complain that the government is too slow, so the DENR was merely acting more promptly to avoid criticism, you might say. But anyway you look at it, that was too prompt.

4. And based on that lightning CDO, the armed elements of the government swooped down on Poro Point and forcibly took over the operation of the port from its legal operator on Aug. 5, 2006. The government, through the PPA, which should see to it that laws are enforced and obeyed, used the lightning CDO as an excuse to defy two temporary restraining orders (TRO) and one injunction issued by the San Fernando court.

That is the reason the Court of Appeals issued a 60-day temporary restraining order stopping the DENR from implementing the CDO against the PPIC.

The CDO might have been "hastily and improvidently used," the court said.

"The PPIC's right to manage the Poro Point seaport pursuant to the pre-incorporation agreement with the Bases Conversion and Development Authority and the John Hay-Poro Point Development Corp., now PPMC, takes the nature of a property right the deprivation of which must observe the basic tenets of due process," the court said.

"Due process" requires that both sides be heard, which was not done before that controversial CDO was issued. When "due process" is absent, arbitrariness and grave abuse of discretion come to the fore.

Worse, the court noted that the alleged "environmental infractions" complained of, and for which the CDO was issued, were not committed by the PPIC itself but by a certain Saturn Marketing Corp., one of the users of the port.

In the meantime, the PPIC, the shipping companies using the Poro Point seaport, the thousands of businessmen in Northern Luzon depending on the seaport for its supplies, and the national and local governments themselves suffered huge business losses as a result of that CDO. Haste really makes waste.

* * *

Airport security officials are mad at the terror expert who breached airport security—not once but twice—carrying bomb components, which he took to the lavatory of the plane on flights from Davao to Manila and back. If he were a real suicide bomber, he could have detonated the bomb in flight and killed the passengers and crew of the jetliner. Luckily, he was just testing the effectiveness of security measures in the two airports. They were found terribly wanting.

Now security officials are hopping mad and are threatening to prosecute him for not coordinating with them. They're mad because the terror expert exposed their incompetence.

If he had coordinated with them, then they would have known that such a test would be conducted. The test was conducted precisely to find out how competent they were. Would a real terrorist tell them that he would plant a bomb on a plane? Airport security's job is to prevent such terrorists from even coming close to a plane. Now the terrorist expert has shown that they cannot only come close but actually board a plane with a bomb.

Instead of being angry, security officials should now coordinate with the expert and find out where they failed. As Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile said, they should give him a medal instead. He is actually helping airport security by finding loopholes in it. Officials should be thanking him instead of threatening him. But they are sore because of wounded pride.

Way to go

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

I MADE IT A POINT TO WATCH THE US OPEN last Sunday night up to the wee hours of Monday morning. I had an inkling it would be Andre Agassi's last game. It was.

Agassi, the "old man" of tennis at 36, ravaged by back pains and other afflictions, had said the US Open would be his last. What he didn't say—and what the tennis world waited with bated breath to know—was how he would go. As the last couple of weeks would show, in a blaze of glory. Well, pretty much so. As the match last Sunday would also show, tinged somewhat by T.S. Eliot's famous presentiment about worlds ending not with a bang but with a whimper.

His first two rounds in the Open—against Andre Pavel and Marcos Baghdatis are now headed for the books as instant classics. Both were five setters, which had him rising to the top of his game, defying in the end time itself. But they would take their toll on him, too. He had cortisone injections in his back to relieve the pain after both matches and could barely move after the second one. I personally didn't think he wouldn't be around for the third round—all the reports said he was in bad shape. His own father thought so. He was right.

In the end, all it took was an unexceptional opponent, one ranked past 100, Benjamin Becker, to knock him off. It was almost torture watching him play last Sunday night, except that like most everyone in the audience, I too was willing him past reason and the laws of the physical universe to do it just one more time. He hobbled about, moved woodenly like the weight of the world was on him, and endured the pain—the physical one of a hurting back and the mental one of not being able to do what not too long ago he could. I hoped at one point he would quit the match, there would have been no shame in it. But he kept on. Before the game, he had told solicitous friends: "If I wanted to quit, I would have done that a long time ago. I didn't come here to quit."

That's the story of his life, and the one thing that drove me to follow his career. As talents go, his contemporary Pete Sampras was by far the more formidable player, winning more majors during his time than anybody else. And compared to current players, Roger Federer is by far the even more awesome, a veritable Achilles with virtually no Achilles heel.

What sets Agassi apart—and which reminds us about the key element, or deepest secret, for success in any game, including the game of life—is character.

I became a minor Agassi fan when he came on to the game as a youth, long hair, denim shorts and a cockiness that proclaimed the dawning of rock-and-roll in tennis. I shared his frustration during his early years when the promise of a rock-and-roll tennis demigod seemed to turn sour. And I reveled with him when he persevered and went on to win one major after another, except the French—the one thing that eluded Sampras and the one thing that eludes Federer now.

But none of that really tested his mettle. What did was the tailspin his career went into in the latter half of the 1990s. For some inexplicable reason, his game dove in 1997. Some of the matches he played at that time completely justified how he would describe the sensation later: "It was an embarrassment just being on the court." I saw some of those games. He turned from Beatles to beat-less overnight, being routinely humbled by humble players, or those in the lower rungs of the ladder panting from the exertion of the climb. He himself would end up there, tumbling from one of the top five players in the world to a truly humble and humbled 141st. It didn't help that he started playing in the minor leagues, which made him look even more pathetic. For all practical purposes, he was washed up.

But slowly, miraculously, by dint of sheer will, he pulled himself back up. I've seen magnificent comebacks. Frank Sinatra did it in the 1970s; John Travolta did it in the 1990s. But talents in singing and acting are not easily ravaged by time, merely by public taste. Talents in sports are. Sports are one field that time rules tyrannically. Agassi came back, and came back more magnificently, or dramatically, than others.

He began the climb in 1998 and, though he didn't win any major that year, served notice he was back on track. He came roaring back the next year. By summer, he fought his way through the French Open and went on to the finals. The only thing that lay between him and redemption was Andrei Medvedev, a young man who was in turn seeking respect. At the outset, the quest for respect seemed superior to the quest for redemption. Medvedev won the first two sets handily.

Then—as Agassi had done with his life over the past couple of years—he turned things around. He battled Medvedev furiously over the next two rounds and tied the match. Leading 5-4 in the deciding set and with match point, he whacked the ball to the other side of the court to see the return sail past him. Game, set, match. Adversity, struggle, triumph. Rise, fall, rise again. It was more than that, he had finally won the one major that had eluded him. It was that he had finally won the greatest battle of his life—the one he had fought with himself. He wept uncontrollably as he kissed the trophy that was handed to him that day.

It was that same scene last Sunday night, though one filled with more poignancy. He couldn't speak for a while, he choked on his words as he attempted to say something while the world stood (literally) on its feet, tears streaming down the faces of many of his fans as well. Words could not convey the depth of his thankfulness for them and the depth of his sadness at leaving them. Well, words weren't really needed. Everything that needed to be said had already been said.

Way to go Andre. Way to go world.

‘Women with no limits’

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

HONOLULU—THIS IS THE THEME OF THE International conference currently being hosted by Gov. Linda Lingle, the first female chief executive of the state of Hawaii. The theme marks the Third Annual International Women's Leadership Conference, which has chosen Hawaii as a venue because of its strategic location as an ideal multicultural community in the middle of the Pacific. There are 500 delegates in this year's conference from all over the world. As the governor envisions, their testimony will "articulate their triumphs and their rise from personal and professional challenges."

US First Lady Laura Bush and the legendary Oprah Winfrey, one of Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People of the 20th Century, have sent videotaped greetings to the conference. Also greeting the delegates from a distance is Dr. Johnetta Cole, the groundbreaking, first female African-American president of Sperlman College, and the first woman ever to be elected to the board of directors of Coca-Cola.

The lifeblood of international conferences is the keynote speakers, who will talk about their personal and professional experiences in a world dominated by their male colleagues. Of the nine women chosen this year as the "keynoters," two are Filipinas, one involved in politics and the other in higher education. Both are very well-known in their own fields, and one, whose story of overcoming her personal tragedy and turning it into a political triumph, is nothing short of amazing. Her story bears repeating for future generations because role models like her are extremely rare to come by.

Isabela Gov. Grace M. Padaca, whom I just met in the last week of August—I just heard about her a couple of years ago from my readings of Philippine newspapers which featured her in news stories after she took on a powerful political dynasty in her province—is truly a "woman with no limits." A polio victim and survivor, Padaca has achieved everything that healthier, normal people usually don't: Valedictorian in high school, magna cum laude in college, a fearless broadcast journalist, a nominee twice over for the Ten Outstanding Men/Women of the year, and finally, a governor!

She has told the conference, "My physical disability may be the easiest handicap after all. There are people who are handicapped by fear, laziness, selfishness. I tell my people, use me as your visual aid. One can rise above her difficulties and uplift herself and others." More than a visual aid, her picture as a vibrant woman in crutches should be an inspiration, the ultimate in overcoming adversity.

The prestigious magazine The Economist has characterized her achievements as "limping forward." Since people's memories may be short, a reminder of her tribulations as the political underdog in Isabela politics is in order. And can you imagine campaigning in crutches?

She had lost in the 2001 election for Congress, in which she was pitted against a 30-year-old political dynasty. She had protested the results showing her as having lost only by 48 votes—this after so much wrangling on, among other issues, how to count ballots with only "Grace" written on them, since the nickname she gave when she filed her candidacy was "Bombo Grace." She has worked previously with the Bombo Radyo in Cauayan, Isabela.

In any event, she ran for governor in 2004 and won by a whopping 44,000 votes. Her campaign motto, "Isabela for all, not for the few," resonated well with voters anxious for change. There could be no doubt this time that this was a genuine victory since the margin was so large, but her opponent accused her of being the candidate of the New People's Army, which had reportedly terrorized the voters. This was incredulous. An earlier TRO blocking her proclamation was eventually lifted by the Commission on Elections, after which she was proclaimed the duly elected governor.

Padaca's success story is unique, but if it could be replicated over with more candidates of courage challenging and winning over seemingly insurmountable odds, there is hope for Philippine politics.

The other Filipina keynote speaker, Amelou Benitez Reyes, who has a Ph.D. in Development Education from Stanford University, is the president and a lifetime trustee of The Philippine Women's University (PWU). She is herself a success story in the "Benitez tradition" of service to the nation, particularly in the field of education. She is PWU's eighth president and the fourth "Philwomenian" alumna to occupy the university's top position.

She is also president of the Women's Studies Association of the Philippines and board member of the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities. She has held positions of authority in various government and civil society organizations, including the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women and the National Council of Women in the Philippines.

Her message to the conference is equally compelling. She says, "The past is History, whereas the future is Her story that embodies women's contributions in the productive and reproductive spheres. Reaffirm women's heroic and transformational role (Motherland), spiritual role as healer (Mother Church) and nurturer (Mother Earth)."

We wish both women leaders well, and we hope they will have more conferences internationally to showcase the achievements of Filipino women.

Belinda A. Aquino, University of Hawaii professor and director of Philippine Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, has taught courses and done research on Filipino women and politics.

A PR disaster—among other things

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT WAS PERHAPS THE WORST PR DISASTER any company had to confront. When the tanker Solar I sank off the coast of Guimaras last Aug. 11, Petron management was oblivious to the fact that thousands of liters of its bunker fuel was seeping out of the sunken ship and washing on to the shoreline of Guimaras and nearby areas.

"We learned about it only on Saturday (Aug. 12) noon," remembers Petron public relations head Virginia Ruivivar, after the survivors of the wreck had been rescued. "The reason we could not issue any statement right off was that we needed to assess the extent of the damage," she adds, admitting that in the first few days of the crisis, they didn't realize how "big" it would become—in political terms, environmental damage, media exposure and corporate image.

But in the weeks that followed, Ruivivar and the rest of the team handling the fallout from the Guimaras disaster would realize the full extent of what they were dealing with. For weeks, the oil spill was the banner story in most newspapers and remains front-page material today. It also led the evening newscasts, and though it is no longer headline material, the impact of the oil spill has spawned nightly news reports and human interest stories.

Ruivivar came for particularly blistering criticism after she publicly stated that Petron has neither a legal nor a contractual liability for the damage caused by the oil spill, although she did try to soften the statement by adding that the company nonetheless felt a "moral obligation" to help with the clean-up and assist the affected communities recover from the disaster, including long-term rehabilitation.

* * *

INDEED, Petron chair and CEO Nicasio Alcantara has been constrained to issue a statement on the oil spill, saying that the company "deeply regrets" the incident and "will take responsibility in addressing the containment and recovery of the oil spill both on land and sea, and more importantly, map out the long-term rehabilitation of the island of Guimaras and other affected areas."

Alcantara stressed that Petron has already "made funds readily available for legitimate expenses and requests" and will "continue to commit all necessary Petron resources in support of this effort," adding that the company is "committed to the solution of this problem."

News reports from Guimaras confirm that Petron has been paying some 1,000 fisherfolk and farmers living in the contaminated areas P300 a day to help with the cleanup efforts. Besides this, says Ruivivar, the company has called on experts from UP Visayas and Silliman University to work on the "road map for rehabilitation" not just of the affected coastline areas and communities, but also of the waters off Guimaras.

World Wildlife Fund president Lory Tan, writing in the "Save Guimaras" website, reports that the Silliman University team has "given greater focus on coastal habitats," while the UP Visayas team will be concentrating on fisheries and deep sea areas.

Engineers from Petron have also been dispatched to help with the cleanup, while staff of Petron Foundation, who have experience helping with disasters and rehabilitation efforts, have been stationed in the coastal barangays, working with community leaders and NGOs.

* * *

STILL, there is no pleasing everybody.

An on-line petition calling for greater liability for Petron and for the relevant government agencies is also calling for a boycott of Petron products until the company agrees to take "full responsibility" for the oil spill.

Asked if the call for a boycott has already had an impact on Petron's sales, Ruivivar says it would be difficult to attribute any downturn in business to a single factor. "Overall, sales in the industry have been falling; it was down by 8 percent last year, and we're expecting a 7 percent decline this year," notes Ruivivar. But the escalating cost of fuel may have more to do with the fall in sales than anything else, she says.

Still, if the boycott against Petron gets off the ground, it would have significant impact on the industry. Currently, Petron ranks first in terms of both retail and commercial sales of oil products in the country.

Legal liability for the damages, meanwhile, will be shouldered by the International Oil Pollution Compensation (IOPC) Fund, set up by member states and oil companies and to which Petron itself contributes, to "provide compensation for oil pollution damage resulting from spills of persistent oil from tankers." Ruivivar says the IOPC is even now ready to receive claims filed by affected families and communities, and process these.

* * *

IN THE LARGER scheme of things—that is, the history of oil spills around the world—the Guimaras disaster would seem to be of minor importance. In Iraq, toward the end of the first Gulf War, Saddam Hussein ordered the release of seven million barrels of oil into the Arabian Gulf, with the resulting slick covering some 770 km of coastline along Saudi Arabia. The Exxon Valdez, so far the biggest tanker mishap on record, resulted in the leak of 270,000 barrels of oil onto the waters off Alaska. The Solar I leak off Guimaras, in contrast, could release some 13,000 barrels of oil on the water, assuming the entire load leaks out of the ship.

But even "just" 13,000 barrels of oil have had a devastating effect on the lives of hundreds of fisherfolk families on the coastal areas of Guimaras, not to mention the lives of sea creatures and birds victimized by the oil slick. And what of the long-term environmental impact? Who can tell how long the habitat will recover, if it will at all? No matter how you "spin" it, it is still a problem waiting for a satisfactory solution.

The magic of a classroom

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

LAST WEEK THE METROBANK FOUNDATION organized a four-day recognition program for the 10 winners in its 2006 Search for Outstanding Teachers. While the foundation also maintains awards for the arts, architecture and design as well as for outstanding soldiers and policemen, the awards for teachers are its flagship project, taking center stage during its anniversary celebrations. There is something Confucian about the way in which our local taipans are putting big money into education—awards, scholarships, schools, etc. I was chosen to deliver a response on behalf of the other awardees: Olivia Caling, Ruth Gelvezon, Isabel Eman, Raquel Fortun, Soledad Roguel, Evelyn Kimpo, Ofelia Lonoza, Gelly Alkuimo and Editha Banguilan. This is what I said:

"After my mother passed away some years back, my youngest sister began the long and painful process of sorting out her belongings to decide what we would keep for sentimental or practical reasons, what we would give away and to whom, what else could be consigned to the second-hand shops on Bangkal or the trash can. Opening all her drawers and cabinets was a revelation to us, it was like getting to know a complete stranger because there were many sides to our mother we had never known before.

"For example, we were horrified to find an axe wrapped in yellowing newspaper, hidden in her bedside table, my sister shrieked, *'Naku kung nagluko pala si* daddy *patay siya!'* As we laughed, my sister brought out our mother's transcript of records and asked aloud, 'Why did she pressure us to study hard and excel, when her grades were not something to brag about?' We laughed again, but afterwards we realized how much our mother wanted to live her dreams through her children, and that in essence is what real teaching is all about—leaving a legacy. Making sure lessons are learned makes a competent teacher. Attaining personal or professional success and happiness makes a good teacher. And it is only by passing all these good things to another, leaving a legacy that makes an outstanding teacher.

"My mother admitted that she was not good at words. That probably explains why she married our father, a closet writer and lecturer in UP Diliman, so they eventually produced both a writer and teacher rolled into one. She wanted one of her children to become a doctor, to care for her in her old age and failing in that (she raised a painter, an architect and a historian) she placed her bets on her grandchildren and pestered me to pursue a Ph.D. When I explained that an MD and a Ph.D. were not the same thing, she replied, *'Kahit di ka makasulat ng reseta, doktor na rin 'yon!'*

"Surely all the winners this year have their own stories to tell about their own parents and will surely agree that we would not be here today if not for our first teachers—our respective fathers and mothers. Parents are lifelong teachers, and the lessons they impart infused with a selfless love remains long after their hair turns gray or even when they have passed away. Such is the influence of these first teachers that we would like to share the limelight with them. We hope you see beyond us to the parents who are largely responsible for this award.

"Parents leave legacies and teachers merely build from where our parents left off. Going over the roster of former awardees, I realized that I was fortunate to have been taught by five of them: Emerita Quito, Ching Cheekee, Gigi de la Cruz, Marcelino Foronda and the late great Doreen Fernandez. One can only imagine how proud or surprised they must be to know I join their ranks today, thus our batch cannot rest easy on our awards because the real challenge is to see one of our students come up this stage in the future to receive their own Outstanding Teacher Award. Only that can truly validate our being chosen Metrobank outstanding teachers for 2006.

"Finally, we go to students. Having read previous acceptance speeches, I noted that many thanked God—that is obvious; some thanked their spouses and children—that is natural; others thanked schools and government officials—that is being pragmatic; but, alas, nobody seemed to have thanked their pets or their students. Every year someone will be burdened to find something that has not been said before, thus we leave the acknowledgement of pet dogs, cats, or fish to a future awardee and talk a bit about students.

"Without students, we would not be teachers. This may explain why they are overlooked. I think I speak for many teachers when they say that we are happiest in a classroom. I have been repeatedly advised to quit teaching and concentrate on writing, but it is only in a classroom that I have instant response. It is in a classroom where you see whether your message is getting across or not. If you are not meant to be a teacher, or teach only because you need a job, entering a classroom for the first time each year or semester will not hold the same wonder it does for us. For those who stand on the blackboard side of a classroom and have a roomful of eyes following our every move, ears listening and (hands recording) every word that falls from our lips on to a notebook, that is a magical moment. This is what keeps us in this so-called 'noblest profession,' that is just as old but not as lucrative or exciting as the 'oldest profession.'"

(Conclusion on Friday)

Shark's fin soup

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

BEFORE HE JOINED THE HOUSTON ROCKETS AND SHOT up to mega-celebrity status, Chinese basketball player Yao Ming played for a group called the Shanghai Sharks.

So, maybe it's appropriate that this former "Shark" has joined a campaign, launched by WildAid, against the consumption of shark's fin soup. Environmental and animal welfare groups claim that sharks are sometimes caught and skinned just for the fins, and then thrown back into the sea.

The campaign against shark's fin soup is a bold move, but it's going to be a long uphill battle. The New York Times notes that in China, Ming's calls to end the consumption of sharks' fins, has gone almost unnoticed.

Tradition

Another celebrity, Hong Kong's Jackie Chan, has spoken out, too, against the use of tiger bones, bear bile and rhino horns for Chinese traditional medicine because it has led to the slaughter of these animals.

Shark's fin soup, tiger bones, bear bile—all of these are Chinese traditions, and, unfortunately, when you talk about changing Chinese culture, you're taking on values and practices that sometimes go back at least a thousand years.

All too often, we presume that the longer a tradition has been around, the better it must be. Culture is powerful precisely because people begin to believe that the traditions are meant to stay with us, from the beginning of time, through eternity.

It's this assumption that allowed some of the most barbaric practices to be perpetuated. For example, for a thousand years Chinese mothers would tightly bind the feet of their daughters, sometimes as young as 4 or 5 years of age, to keep them tiny. The practice actually fractured the foot bones, and crippled the child; yet the "lotus feet" were praised as the epitome of female beauty and eroticism, and poems were written to extol their allure.

Another example is female genital mutilation. A ritual practice in parts of Africa, it involves the removal of the clitoris and, in a more extreme form, the sewing up of the labia. It is a horrendous practice, yet even women physicians from those countries have sometimes defended the practice, offering to perform the procedure in a clinic, at least with anesthesia, to reduce the chances of infection.

Context

Pierre Bourdieu, a French sociologist and philosopher made waves in the academic world many years ago when he described "culture" using the Latin word "habitus." He pointed out how social structures are so powerful we end up "doing" culture pretty much like a habit. When I first read about habitus I told myself, goodness, we Filipinos have been describing culture as "*kaugalian*" (habits) for the longest time ever.

But yes, it does take Bourdieu to remind us that habits are powerful because we're not conscious about their power. Like habits, culture insinuates itself into all we do, into our minds and our bodies. I have endless debates with relatives whenever I question certain traditions and always, they try to end the argument by saying: "It's our culture, and there's nothing we can do about it."

Many practices are attached to beliefs that are accepted without question, like the tiger bones and bear bile as effective medicines. What's sad is that they are totally ineffective.

Culture becomes even more powerful when it is made sacred, sometimes with claims that it is God-given. Advocates of female genital mutilation sometimes claim it's a Muslim practice, yet nowhere is it mentioned in the Koran or in the *hadith* (sayings attributed to Islam's founder, the prophet Mohammed). Similarly, Catholic conservatives like to claim that family planning goes against "natural law," which is supposedly given to us by God.

Fortunately, even theologians now accept that sacred traditions and holy books need to be understood in a historical context. Many cultural practices—religious or secular—emerged in response to some social need. Female genital mutilation, for example, is believed to even predate Islam, and may have been practiced because of the inter-tribal warfare at that time, which often led to women being raped. Perverse as it may sound, the mutilation was intended as a kind of chastity belt, to protect women.

It was also this inter-tribal warfare that led to Islam's endorsement of polygamy, which was intended to find ways to provide for the widows and their children. Mohammed himself took a widow as one of his wives.

Similarly, the admonition against birth control, often citing the biblical call to "go forth and multiply," was understandable in a time when the world's population was tiny, and when agricultural societies needed as many hands as possible to work the fields. Times do change, and it's not surprising all the world's major religions, except for Catholicism, now look at the nonpractice of family planning as irresponsible, even immoral.

Parties

Besides learning to probe into the historical contexts of culture, we should also learn to dig up—and question—many of its practices' latent or hidden functions. Footbinding in China began in the Sung dynasty, a time when Chinese women were becoming quite independent and assertive. So, for all the talk about lotus feet making the women more "feminine" with their tiny steps, foot-binding's hidden function was really to immobilize women, keeping them at home and dependent on the men.

Culture is there as well to show off one's status, and this takes us back to the shark's fin soup. Previously a privilege only for emperors and the Chinese aristocracy, shark's fin soup has become a way of boasting of one's wealth, especially for the new rich. A local lauriat without shark's fin soup could get tongues wagging, the host seen as being miserly.

We all need to start thinking hard about the habits of culture, through an ethical lens. It's not just questioning the menu, but also of tackling the very idea of an expensive party and of conspicuous consumption.

Birthdays are big in the Philippines; the government even allows employees to take a birthday leave with pay. Even the poorest of families will splurge meager savings for a child's birthday party. The rationale here is that one should share his blessings—thank God for another year. I wonder. Is it right to spend money that could have been used for the child's many other needs? And if a family can really afford a party, shouldn't the blessings be shared by donating to the poor?

It seems the banks are now ready to capitalize on culture. Banco de Oro has been running an ad: "For only P63 a day ang *saya-saya ng* birthday party *ng anak ko.* Kayang-kaya!" (For only P63 a day, my child's birthday party was fun. I could afford it!) I read the fine print and realized that was based on a P20,000 loan, payable over 12 months. Now, wasn't there a time when banks were there to instill a culture of savings?

The INQUIRER is a member of the
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Delayed presidential reaction

I COULDN'T HELP BUT SHAKE MY HEAD in disbelief after reading the headline "National calamity declared." (PDI, 8/26/06) For the life of me, I can't understand why it took President Macapagal-Arroyo more than one week to declare the oil spill off Guimaras island a calamity.

From the time the MT Solar I sank with its cargo of 450,000 gallons of crude oil, all logic clearly pointed to the threat the oil spill posed to the plethora of marine life in Panay Gulf and to the fishermen and the flourishing tourism industry in nearby islands. (Guimaras is known for its excellent beaches and world-class mangoes).

I almost broke down and wept after watching the governor of Guimaras cry on TV, pleading for help in cleaning up the oil spill. It's sad that President Arroyo was not moved by that appeal.

A President is supposed to have a keen sense of urgency and danger, especially when it concerns the safety and well-being of his/her people. A disaster of this magnitude will have long-lasting effects on our country economically, and Ms Arroyo's slow response clearly shows a failure of leadership.

Knowing full well that our Coast Guard lacks the equipment needed to clean up the oil spill, I would like to appeal to operators of beauty salons across the country to gather and donate the strands of hair they collect to Petron or to the local government of Guimaras. These can be used to effectively clear the water of oil. Whatever hair they can donate will be of big help. It's the least we can do for our brothers and sisters in Guimaras.

—FREDA VELUZ,
fredaveluz@gmail.com

Disgusting stunt that risked the lives of plane passengers

I FELT SICK AFTER READING THE NEWS report about the bomb expert who brought in explosives and assembled the bomb inside a plane lavatory. (PDI, 9/1/06)

While I appreciate his efforts to show the lapses in airport security, I believe he went overboard when he actually assembled the bomb. I know he didn't mean to detonate it. But I cringed at the thought of the bomb accidentally exploding.

I think it was an irresponsible act on his part. He should have just called the attention of airport security officials after he passed through security checks without his bomb being detected. He could have proven his point even if he had not boarded the plane. There was absolutely no need at all to assemble the bomb inside the plane. He played with the lives of the people on board the plane. It was a disgusting stunt.

—EYRICHE CORTEZ,
Makati City

The bomb was not actually assembled.—Ed.

Is it really Senate that needs to be abolished?

HAS THE SENATE REALLY LOST ITS purpose? A paid advertisement that came out on Aug. 10, 2006 called on the people to support the move to change our form of government from the presidential to parliamentary system, a shift which, in effect, would abolish the Senate.

But it is clear from the last lines of the ad that the administration wants to get rid of the Senate because of the investigations that the senators have initiated to look into many government irregularities.

The pro-Charter change ad also argues that the Senate has passed only a few laws—254 in all. But we must remember that these Senate inquiries are in aid of legislation and it is not necessarily the number of laws passed that determines the usefulness of a legislative institution but how that institution has served in a manner benefiting the people.

The ad also claims that the Senate has become irrelevant. How is that, when the Senate continues to faithfully play its key role in the check-and-balance act that is vital for good governance and in a democratic society?

Pro-Cha-cha groups also cite Sen. Edgardo Angara's statement that the Senate has started to lose its purpose. But the statement only reflected Angara's personal opinion and it was made in the exercise of his right to express himself. It should not be taken as the voice of the Senate. Angara is only one senator; he is not the whole Senate.

The pro-Cha-cha advocates may reason out that the ads they are paying for are meant to educate the people about the "heavenly" benefits of a shift from presidential to parliamentary system. But I think they're running the ads because they know they lack support for their cause. Of course, anyone can say that they have gathered millions of signatures for Cha-cha. But is it the true voice of the people?

—BEE JAY A. SEBASTIAN,
AB Political Science,
Columban College, Olongapo City

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DAY 1 September 14, Thursday
9:00 Registration and Conference Program Overview
9:30 Ribbon Cutting
10:15 Awarding of the 10 Inspiring Technopreneurs
10:45 **FORUM 1: "Profiling the Technopreneur"** Panelists: Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala (Ayala Corp.), Atty. Felipe Gozon (GMA Network). Moderators: Myla Villanueva (MDI Group Holdings), Joey Concepcion (PCE) & Cito Beltran (ANC)
1:00 **FORUM 2: "Broadbanding your Business"** Panelists: Ben Colayco (Level Up!), Ray Espinosa (ePLDT), Tunde Fafunwa (Bayantel), Judd Gallares (GMA New Media Inc.), Minette Navarrete (Globe Telecom), Ricardo Pronove (GoVida), Dr. Bill Torres (Mozcom), Dennis Valdes (Philweb) Moderators: Dondi Mapa (Dell Philippines) & Ces Drilon (ABS-CBN Broadcasting)*
2:45 **FORUM 3: "Growing Money from Trees: Business Opportunities in Biotechnology"** Panelists: Dr. Nina Halos (Arnichem Biofertilizers), Jun Lao (Chemrez Biodiesel), Sammy Latay (Elixir Pacific International Corp.), Danny Manayaga (Secura Natural Products) Moderators: Maoi Arroyo (Hybridigm Consulting) & Mari Kaimo (ABS-CBN)

DAY 2 September 15, Friday
10:10 **FORUM 4: "Jumpstarting your Tech Venture"** Panelists: Domingo Bonifacio (Remec Broadband Wireless), Joey Gurango (Webworks), Martin Lichauco (Walden International Phils), Atty. Christopher Lim (Quisumbing Torres Law Firm), Dennis Mendiola (Chikka Asia), Dennis Posadas (Rice Bowl and Chips Author), Mark Yambot (Microsoft) Moderators: Paco Sandejas (Narra VC) & Pia Hontiveros (ANC)
1:00 **Idea Factory** Promising technologies/applications from IT companies, researchers and scientists are presented as business opportunities to entrepreneurs, funders and angel investors, in search of mentoring and financial support for incubation, development and next-stage growth. Reactors: Maoi Arroyo (Hybridigm Consulting), Joey Gurango (Webworks), Dickie Gonzalez (PESO); VC/Investor Panel: Martin Lichauco (Walden International Phils.), Guillermo Luchango (ICCP), Paco Sandejas (Narra VC), Myla Villanueva (MDI Group Holdings) Moderators: Anthony Pangilinan, Twink Macaraig (ANC)*
2:30 **FORUM 5: "Trending Tomorrow: Where Technology Is Taking Us"** Panelists: Patrick Aronson (Motorola), Ricky Banaag (Intel), Ernest Cu (SPI Technologies), Tunde Fafunwa (Bayantel), Benedict Hernandez (eTelecare Global Solutions), TJ Javier (Microsoft), Butch Jimenez (PLDT), Patricio Pineda (Globe Telecom) Moderators: Anthony Pangilinan, Karen Davila (ABS-CBN)*, and Myla Villanueva (MDI Group Holdings)
6-9 PM **Cocktails / Launch of Mentoring Website gonegosyo.net**

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Biased reporting in favor of Lafayette?

THIS IS TO FORMALIZE OUR COMPLAINT about the biased report on our protest activities against Lafayette's mining operations in Rapu Rapu, Albay. ("Deportation of 3 Greenpeace activists sought by Lafayette," PDI, 8/25/06) The news item did not include our side of the story (e.g., why we staged our protest and what we found in the creeks coming out of the mine). We find this curious because, that same day, we also issued a press statement about our activities. More importantly, there was an INQUIRER photographer with us during those activities.

The news story quoted heavily from a press statement that was issued by Sorsogon Gov. Raul Lee and featured prominently in Lafayette's website. The press statement contained unsubstantiated and outrageous allegations against Greenpeace, suggesting, for one, that our activists "poured huge amounts of pesticides into a creek."

Everybody knows that we take great pride in our credibility as an organization and we cannot take such charges lightly. That those charges, unsubstantiated as they were, made their way to the pages of the INQUIRER is truly regrettable.

I would also like to point out that the same report came out in other papers on the same day (verbatim), bolstering our suspicion that it was a PR job masquerading as a news report.

This is not the first time that we have seen biased reporting in favor of Lafayette in the INQUIRER. Other reports, especially those filed relative to this issue by Bobby Labalan, one of your reporters in Albay, have been consistently slanted in favor of the mining company. The same reporter has also been the subject of complaints from other groups we work with in the region for his unbalanced reports on this issue.

However, I still believe that in the end, integrity and journalistic ethics will prevail in the INQUIRER.

—VON HERNANDEZ,
campaign director,
Greenpeace Southeast Asia,
von.hernandez@dialb.greenpeace.org

Greenpeace is right. The story was based on a press release from Lafayette. But Greenpeace failed to mention that on the same page, occupying bigger space than the Lafayette statement, were two big photos of its protest, taken by INQUIRER photographer, Rem Zamora. (Another INQUIRER picture of the protest had come out the previous day.) Also on Aug. 25, Greenpeace sent a press release but at well past deadline; the statement came out the next day. So for three days in a row, Greenpeace's side came out in the INQUIRER. Lafayette's came out once.—Ed.

* * *

The only story I wrote about Greenpeace and Lafayette was the one titled "Greenpeace told to submit report on contamination." (PDI, 8/27/06) The story itself quoted people from all sides, including government. Days before I filed the story I tried to get in touch with Arthur Dionio, Greenpeace's contact person, but his phone was unattended and the text messages I sent him were not answered. As to my being the subject of complaints from Greenpeace allies due to my alleged unbalanced reports, I am willing to face them to answer their allegations. My stories on mining issues have always carried the complaints and concerns of anti-mining groups.

—BOBBY LABALAN,
correspondent, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

'Green' propaganda for 2007 elections

THE GREEN PHILIPPINE HIGHWAYS IS another *zarzuela* meant to get political mileage for Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes in preparation for the 2007 senatorial election. Just like the *zarzuela* he staged in the good old days at the Department of Interior and Local Government where he would parade crime suspects before the media.

Planting trees along highways is intended to arrest pollution caused by motor vehicles. How about arresting landslides and floods caused by denuded mountains due to illegal logging and mining operations? Of course, voters can't see Reyes' 2007 billboards in the mountains.

Pure and unadulterated propaganda, this Green Philippine Highways.

—EFREN H. MERCADO,
Mercado Compound,
Mataas na Lupa, Lipa City

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Rolando B. Fernandez**

No peace even when Palparan is gone

By Tonette Orejas
Lupao, Nueva Ecija

PEACE RALLY." THE BIG STREAMer decking the white wall of the stage at a covered court in Lupao, Nueva Ecija, on Sept. 3 proclaimed what the activity was all about.

But it wasn't. It was about conflict, and choosing which side to be on.

The prodding by military officials, clad in civilian clothes, told much of it when they rallied about 3,000 to shout: "*Mabuhay ang demokrasya! Ibagsak ang komunismo!* (Long live democracy! Defeat communism!)"

One after the other, speakers talked of their "enlightenment." A former communist rebel, who went by the alias "Ka Joy," urged those in the crowd to block the recruitment efforts of the New People's Army and the Communist Party of the Philippines in their communities.

CONTROVERSIAL Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan spreads his anticommunist messages to a crowd in Lupao, a bailiwick of the communist New People's Army in Nueva Ecija, in a four-hour lecture filled with subtle warnings and harsh admonitions of cooperating with the military. TONETTE OREJAS

Lt. Col. Gregory Cayetano, commander of the Army's 71st Infantry Battalion that organized the rally, spoke little, confining his talk to why his troops were spread all over Lupao.

"We're clearing the town of enemies," he said.

Then, he introduced the man he called, "guide, light, idol." That man, Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, came to the event in cotton polo and jeans.

Throughout his speech that lasted four hours, Palparan, chief of the Army's 7th Infantry Division, pounded on a single message—civilians are participants, not onlookers or bystanders, in the government's all-out war against insurgency.

"Let us not be afraid. Let us not be carried away by fear. The rebels are only few. From 37 fighters, they are now only 14 in Lupao," he said.

"*Tayo ang may karapatang manakot sa mga masama* (It is us who have the right to threaten those who are evil)," he said.

Subtle warnings

Palparan, who discussed the communist movement's use of "propaganda and threats," also dished out subtle warnings. "*Kung masama ka, dapat mawala ka* (If you're bad, you should be banished)," he said.

But he said people could change. "It is your responsibility to be a good person," he said.

He made them commit to the task of fighting the rebels and to deny them support.

"*Kaya ba* (Can you do that)?" he asked them. "*Kaya* (We can)!" they shouted.

Early on in the program, Lupao Mayor Alexander Joanino endorsed Palparan's campaign. "What the general did suit Lupao very well," he said, referring to efforts at "bringing peace to the town."

The Army was not wanting in symbols and played on emotions. As the effigies of Bayan

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No peace even when Palparan is gone

From page A17

Muna Representatives Satur Ocampo and Teodoro Casiño, and CPP founder Jose Ma. Sison were burning, the Army band played the heart-rending "Lupa."

Widows, orphans

In Barangay Parista, more than 5 km from the venue, Joan Abellera, 25, quietly breast-fed her 8-month-old daughter that night.

There was hurting in her eyes. Every day since July 13, she has been waiting time for her husband, Rodel. Peace has left the household since two men abducted him there at 7:30 p.m. that day.

At the house next door, two men also abducted her mother-in-law, Teresita Abellera.

What was unsettling to Joan was that although she saw the face of one of her husband's abductors—a soldier—her complaint at the Commission on Human Rights and her petition for habeas corpus before the Supreme Court have yet to produce the suspects and her relatives.

Joan said she wanted to leave Lupao as the anticommunist sentiment in the town grows, and given the military's labeling of Rodel and Teresita as NPA supporters.

"*Wala naman kaming ibang pupuntahan* (We don't have any place to go)," she said.

What pained her more, she said, was that she had to leave her two other children, aged 5 and 4, to the care of her relatives so that she could devote time following up the cases.

Genuine peace, she said, meant having Rodel by her side as they raised their family.

In Cuyapo, a neighboring town of Lupao, the house of the Javiers has been desolate. Almost a year ago, on Oct. 2, 2005, seven bullets fired by five men believed to be under Cayetano's command killed the man of the house, Armando, also the municipal coordinator of Anakpawis.

Armando's wife Jocelyn and their only child were wounded. Both have fled town.

Nil chance

Like Joan, Jocelyn has summoned her courage to bring her husband's killers to justice even if, she said, the chances are nil.

For one, she said the police altered her affidavit by stating that she had admitted that her husband was an NPA rebel. The CHR has issued a subpoena for a copy her affidavit.

She said she was also certain that soldiers were behind the murder, telling the CHR that weeks before Armando was killed, the soldiers had pressured him to tell on other leftist leaders in the town.

Javier, now chair of the Mothers and Relatives against Tyranny (Martyr), said it was wrong to think that Palparan's retirement on Sept. 11 would restore peace in Central Luzon.

"He's not even charged with any crime although many killings had happened in his area. He will still be around because we heard he's going to be appointed to a government position. And then (Palparan's successor, Maj. Gen. Juanito) Gomez is said to be like Palparan also," Javier said to explain her distrust.

To her, it was difficult to accept Palparan as a harbinger of peace because, as the event in the family showed, the anti-insurgency drive brought gloom.

"*Wala kaming kapanatagan* (We have no peace of mind)," she added.

Irony

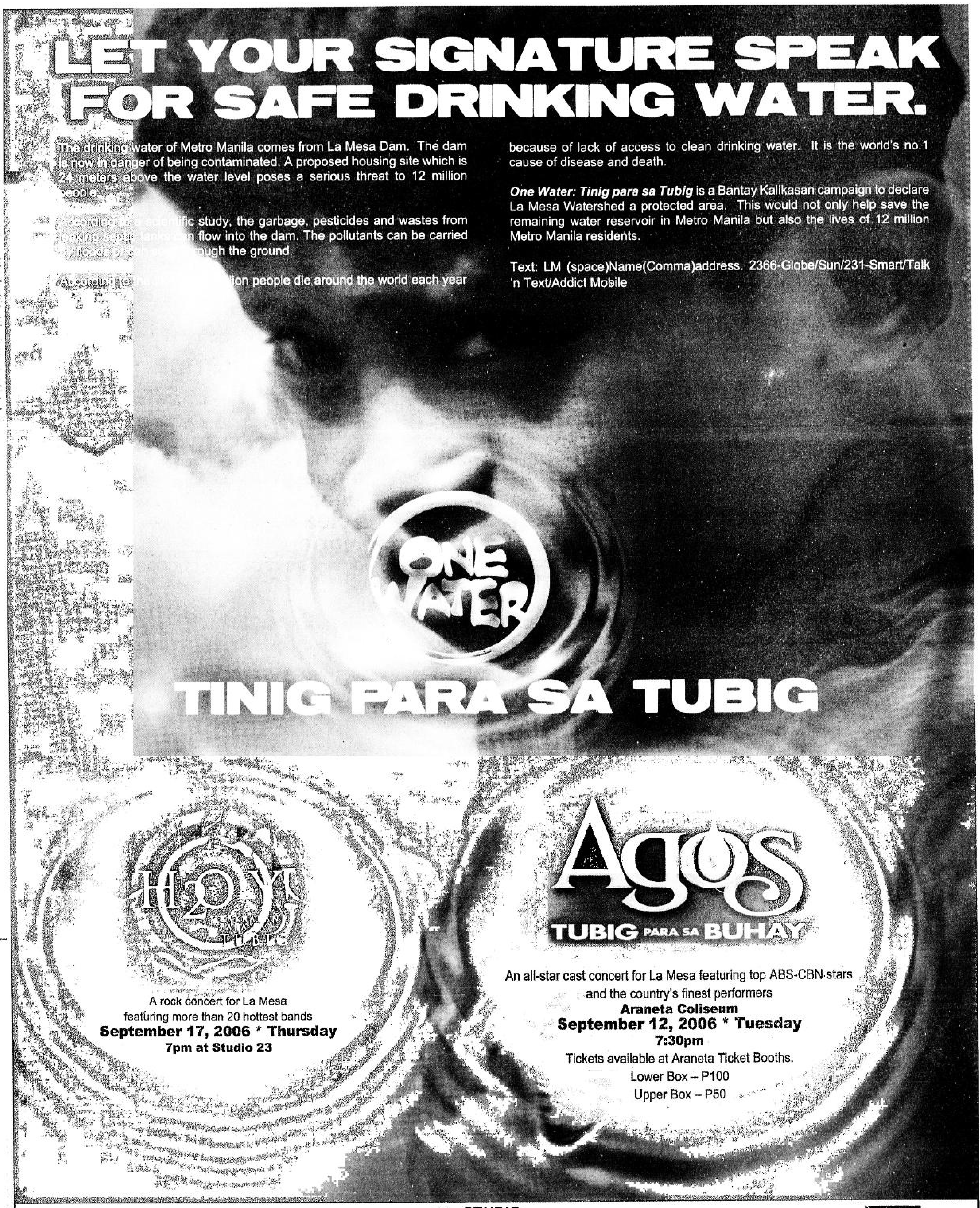
Barangay chair Benjamin Andaya of Namulandayan—site of a massacre of 17 civilians following an encounter between government troops and rebels on Feb. 10, 1987—said peace came with a lot of irony in his village.

While the 14th IB was blamed for the "Lupao Massacre," it was the 71st IB that restored peace, he said.

"The village is quiet now. Rebels don't come around now," he said.

Barangay chair Freddie de Guzman of Parista is bothered by the abductions of the Abelleras and the killing of two residents, Philip de la Cruz and Mario Floreindo, both members of the party-list group Bayan Muna.

"I don't know who were behind these incidents, but I do hope there would be no more of these. I want my fellow villagers to live in peace. We just want to toil on the land," De Guzman said.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Gov't, MILF resume talks in KL

KUALA LUMPUR—A MUSLIM separatist group and the Philippine government have resumed peace talks in Malaysia aimed at breaking a deadlock over the economic control of land, rebels and officials said Tuesday.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is seeking economic control over a proposed fragmented Muslim homeland in the southern region of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's chief adviser on the peace process, Jesus Dureza, said the demand for territory remained the most important issue in peace negotiations with the MILF.

"Our negotiating panel is there in Malaysia. They will be discussing the issue of ancestral domains, that is the main item," Dureza told AFP from Manila.

The Philippine government has proposed official recognition of Muslim claims over some 600 villages and towns, while the MILF has tabled a list of more than 1,000.

At stake are entitlements by the large Muslim minority in predominantly Roman Catholic Philippines to a share in the earnings from natural resources in the areas.

Talks are scheduled to continue in an undisclosed location in Malaysia until Sept. 9. Negotiators for both parties in Malaysia were not immediately available for comment.

The issue of ancestral domain, once resolved, will form part of a final peace pact, Dureza said, but cautioned there were "still a lot of things to work on" before a final peace accord could be reached.

MILF spokesman Eid Kabalu earlier told AFP the group remained hopeful that some agreements on ancestral domain could be reached in Malaysia, but acknowledged it was "the thorniest issue" in negotiations.

The two panels will issue a joint communiqué if they reach a substantial agreement after the talks end in Malaysia, Dureza said.

The 12,000-strong MILF has been waging a separatist rebellion for an Islamic state in Mindanao since 1978, when it split from the larger Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

The MNLF signed a peace deal with Manila in 1996, dropping its separatist ideology for limited self-rule.

The MILF and the smaller and more extreme Abu Sayyaf group were left out of that accord.

Ms Arroyo signed a truce with the MILF in 2001 and later engaged the rebels in negotiations with an aim of signing a final accord this year.

A ceasefire agreement is in place between the Philippine military and the MILF, but clashes take place sporadically.

Some military authorities earlier accused the MILF of harboring terror suspects, an accusation that the MILF denied. *AFP*

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The drinking water of 12,000,000 Metro Manila residents comes from the La Mesa Dam.
The water in La Mesa is in danger of being contaminated. Soon.

Houses and possibly commercial establishments will be built only 24 meters above the water level.

According to a scientific study, the garbage, pesticides and wastes from leaking septic tanks can flow into La Mesa. The pollutants can be carried by floods or can seep through the ground and reach the water table.

The mitigating measures are very, very expensive and they are not even 100% guaranteed. In fact, there's no mitigating measure against pollutants that seep through the ground.

Unclean water can cause severe diarrhea, dysentery, typhoid fever, cholera, hepatitis A and many other diseases.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 3.4 million people around the world die each year because of lack of access to clean drinking water. It is also the world's no.1 cause of death.

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www.lamesaecopark.com

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Join the signature campaign asking the government to declare La Mesa watershed a protected area.

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AN APPEAL TO PRESIDENT ARROYO

The Expropriation of Terminal 3 a Mis-use of the People's Money

Which should prevail, the decision of our Supreme Court or that of a foreign-based arbitration court?

Madame President, we are appealing to your sense of justice and fairness. Kindly intervene and direct your officials to withdraw the expropriation of the unfinished NAIA-Terminal 3 built by PIATCO.

By heeding this appeal, your Administration would be:

- Stopping the (a) possible misuse of some $565 million – representing the "just compensation" demanded by PIATCO which is more than the $175 million it actually expended on Terminal 3 – of the people's money which could be used to improve the lot of more than 30% of our fellow Filipinos now mired in extreme poverty; and (b) execution of the order of Pasay City RTC Judge Jesus B. Mupas to the government to immediately pay PIATCO an initial amount of P3 billion.

- Upholding the rule of law in consonance with our Supreme Court's decision (a) nullifying the contract of PIATCO for violating the Constitution and (b) recommending the imposition on PIATCO of the "stiffest sanctions permissible under the law." Acceding to the demand for "just compensation" will enable PIATCO to profit from Terminal 3 in contravention of the SC ruling.

- Aborting the anomalous expropriation of a government property, as clearly enunciated in the SC decision, which is obviously intended to prevent the opening of PIATCO's books that will expose alleged corruption in the construction of Terminal 3;

- Gaining the moral ascendancy in its declared war on corruption as the withdrawal of the initiative to expropriate Terminal 3, and its attendant hasty payment of PIATCO's claim for "just compensation, will serve as a clear warning to government officials, who seemed obsessed with paying PIATCO $565 million when government as owner of Terminal 3 can recover this facility for its actual construction costs estimated at only $175 million(minus the damages government incurred due to PIATCO's bad faith), to toe the line.

- Speeding up the opening of Terminal 3, thereby preventing its deterioration into another mega-buck "white elephant" as the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, International Expo to name a few; and finally

- Erasing the widespread negative perception that the initiative to expropriate Terminal 3 is but a sinister plot to eventually hand-over the airport facility to PIATCO in contravention of the Supreme Court's decision against PIATCO.

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DISRUPTED LIVES
The extent of the damage that the oil spill from a tanker that was carrying bunker fuel for Petron is evident in a classroom in a Guimaras village that was transformed into a shelter for residents who were told to leave the comfort of their homes to avoid the stench of the oil spill.
ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

GMA sets 3rd visit to Guimaras to check on oil spill cleanup

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—PRESIDENT MAcapagal-Arroyo will visit Guimaras Island today, her third in 11 days, to check on operations to contain a massive oil spill from a sunken tanker.

The President was expected to convene the National Disaster Coordinating Council and the regional Task Force Solar I Oil Spill at the Raymen Beach Resort in the poblacion of Nueva Valencia town, the hardest hit among the five municipalities of Guimaras.

Ms Arroyo was expected to check the implementation of the plans agreed upon during her last visit and NDCC meeting on Inampulugan Island on Aug. 28. These include the testing and analysis of fish and other marine life in the affected areas.

The President will proceed here from Cebu where she will speak at the 2nd National ICT in Basic Education Congress.

The Coast Guard on Saturday discovered that two of the crew members of a tugboat hired by Petron Corp. have fake licenses.

Commander Harold Jarder, Coast Guard station chief in Iloilo and head of the cleanup operations, said the Professional Regulation Commission licenses of Eddie Edep and Enrique Ricamata, chief mate and engineer of the tugboat Marc, were forged.

The tugboat, owned by Asian Shipping, was among the two hired by Petron to tow barges that will transfer oil-contaminated debris out of Guimaras.

Petron spokesperson Carlos Tan said their company was unaware of the fake licenses.

"They (Edep and Ricamata) will be replaced and we will follow Coast Guard procedures," Tan told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

Petron is also facing questions on the unauthorized use of chemicals in its cleanup operations along the dirtied shorelines.

The Nueva Valencia police seized on Saturday five high-pressure sprayers and a chemical container on the island-barangay of Guiwanon.

Mayor Diosdado Gonzaga said he ordered the confiscation because the spraying was done without coordination with the Coast Guard as earlier agreed upon.

₱160-M BCDA deal without board OK cancelled

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC Zone—The head of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) appeared headed for more controversy after he signed a contract for a P160-million supplemental agreement to the P21-billion project to build the Subic-Clark-Tarlac expressway project in Bataan, Pampanga and Tarlac.

But Narciso Abaya, BCDA president, was quoted by a BCDA statement as saying the contract had been cancelled. There was no elaboration, however.

The cancellation followed reports that Abaya unilaterally approved the supplemental agreement for consultancy services without the approval of the BCDA board.

As president of the BCDA, Abaya was authorized to approve without board concurrence only projects worth up to P50 million.

BCDA officials earlier said they were puzzled by Abaya's decision to approve the supplemental agreement without the backing of the board.

A statement sent to the INQUIRER said the BCDA, through Abaya, and the Japanese PCI-KEI-NK Joint Venture, through Tsunemi Nagata, cancelled the contract when Abaya "belatedly found out it lacked prior requisite review and approval from the BCDA board."

According to Abaya, the agency did not disburse funds for the cancelled contract that involved consultancy for the 94-km highway, including its negotiations with the Toll Regulatory Board.

The cost of the contract was broken down into three components totaling P163 million, according to the summary of cost estimates: 148.4 million yen (P63.8 million), P89.6 million and P9.6 million.

Under the contract, the joint venture consultant would, among other things, provide the "necessary additional manpower during the construction supervision stage" of the SCTEP and provide assistance to the BCDA in the "parcellary survey of lots affected by the construction of the expressway for submission to the Bureau of Lands and ultimate titling to BCDA."

An INQUIRER source said it was "highly irregular" for the BCDA to enter into a contract without the respective boards of each parties approving it.

Government entities are always required to submit all contracts to the scrutiny and approval of the board, the source said.

The P21-billion highway project that will link three major economic development hubs in Central Luzon appear to be some 9 percent behind schedule, registering a mere 37.05 percent accomplishment to date.

Earlier, BCDA project director Rex Chan denounced what he said was an apparent smear campaign against him allegedly launched by a group of contractors who said advanced commissions are being solicited from local suppliers eyeing contacts from the Japanese project managers.

Chan said he has never endorsed any proposal to the Japanese project managers "unless they were also endorsed by my boss," referring to Abaya. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Palawan mining board junks case vs firm

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—THE Provincial Mining Regulatory Board here has dropped the complaint filed by a mining firm against an associate for lack of merit.

The board rejected the appeal of the Olympic Mines and Development Corp. to rescind its operating agreement with the Platinum Group Metals Corp.

In a statement furnished to the INQUIRER, the board headed by Raymundo Crisostomo said Olympic presented recycled arguments submitted to the Palawan Regional Trial Court.

"As borne out by the records, the letter-complaint (of Olympic) does not present any new or other grounds aside from those matters that have already been passed upon by the court in Civil Case No. 4181," it said.

Civil Case No. 4181 stemmed from the petition for a preliminary injunction filed by Olympic against PGMC designed to revoke their 2003 operating agreement.

The RTC had junked Olympic's petition, which sought to prevent the operation of PGMC in two mining sites in San Isidro and Sofronio Española in the municipality of Narra, through the cancellation of their operating agreement.

"The contract must bind both contracting parties, its validity or compliance cannot be left to the will of one of them," the PMRB said. *Inquirer Southern Luzon*

2 more Chinese poachers freed without any charges

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—TWO more Chinese poachers were released through the intercession of the national government without the filing of any charges.

Palawan officials and residents decried the poachers' release through the intervention of the Department of Foreign Affairs apparently to prevent straining relations between China and the Philippines over the disputed Kalayaan Group of Islands (KGI).

When the two Chinese poachers were caught near Pag-asa Island at the KGI last week, the DFA ordered their release without any charges.

Rep. Antonio Alvarez said he advised the mayor of Kalayaan Islands to file a case against the Chinese who were caught with a large volume of sodium cyanide. But they were surprised to learn that the Chinese were already turned over to the Chinese consulate.

Alvarez said Western Command Chief Adm. Tirso Danga informed him that the release was due to a "Letter of Instruction" from the DFA saying any action against the Chinese must be restrained in the disputed area.

"In illegal fishing, diplomatic relations should not be applied," Alvarez said.

He added that authorities should have at least filed charges before the Chinese were released.

"I really don't mind releasing them later as long as cases were filed and the rule of law was applied," he added.

Palawan officials could not file cases against the poachers because they are no longer in the hands of Philippine authorities. By turning the poachers over to the Chinese consulate, the Philippines already lost jurisdiction.

Rep. Abraham Mitra, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development chair, also expressed disgust.

"I am very disappointed and it may create a dangerous precedent," Mitra said.

Mitra said officials would discuss the issue at the next meeting of the environmental council.

Mitra said whether or not the poachers were caught in the disputed area, cases should be filed.

He said there were witnesses who would testify that the poachers were outside the disputed area. The Chinese were caught by the KGI Defense Group of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

In recent years, many Chinese poachers held for catching endangered species, and with the use of illegal means, were released because of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and China.

Palawan officials and residents have been complaining that while Filipino fishermen could get jailed for using fine mesh nets, the Chinese could get away with killing endangered turtles and poisoning hectares of coral reefs through cyanide use. *Jofelle P. Tesorio, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Poll for Bacoor cityhood set Sept. 13

BACOOR, CAVITE—This progressive coastal town took a step closer to becoming the fourth city in the province of Cavite after the House of Representatives set the plebiscite for its cityhood on Sept. 13, Mayor Jessie Castillo said yesterday.

Castillo said he was optimistic that majority of the more than 200,000 voters of the municipality would come out and support the bid to become the newest city in the province after Tagaytay, Cavite and Trece Martires.

"This is a great opportunity ... to show ... that we're more than ready to be a component city," Castillo told the INQUIRER.

Located north of Cavite and south of Manila Bay, Bacoor lies in the boundary of the province and Metro Manila.

Since the early 1990s, the town has become one of Cavite's center of commerce and business with construction of malls, banks and other commercial establishments in the area. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM
Financial Center, Pasay City, Metro Manila 1308

PHYSICAL RESOURCES DISPOSAL COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO SUBMIT OFFERS

The GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM invites all interested parties to submit offers to the Manager, Materials and Supplies Department, Level I, Core B, New GSIS Headquarters Building, Pasay City for the Negotiated Sale of the following motor vehicles on "AS IS, WHERE IS" basis until September 18, 2006.

Quantity	Description
Two (2)	Alfa Romeo, model 2002, plate no. SFX-872 and SFX-882, gasoline engine
One (1)	Mitsubishi Pajero, model 1999, Intercooler Turbo 1800, plate no. SGY-376, diesel engine
One (1)	Toyota Corona, model 1992, plate no. SEP-366
One (1)	Toyota Corona, model 1980, plate no. SAS-952

The above items may be inspected at the New GSIS Headquarters, Financial Center, Pasay City during office hours. For further inquiry please contact Mr. Ernesto Lopez at Tel nos. 891-62-95 or 891-6161 loc 4721.

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(SGD) ARNALDO C. CUASAY
Chairperson

(PDI - Sept. 6, 9 & 12, 2006)

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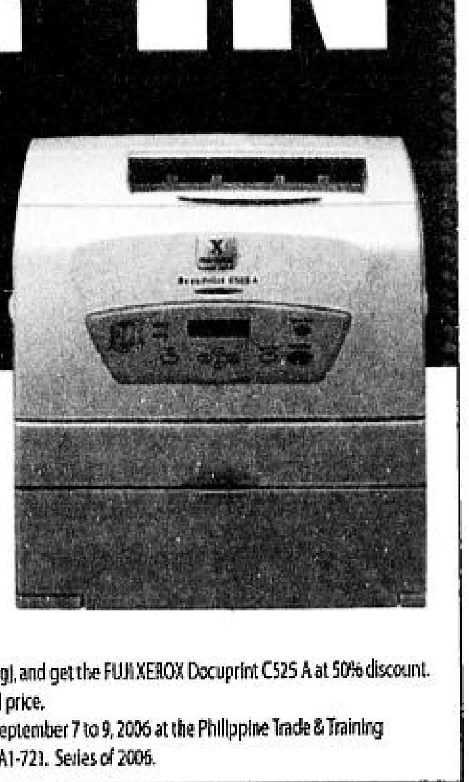

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OneVoice asks SC to junk people's initiative

By Armand N. Nocum and Norman Bordadora

THE SUPREME COURT, MEETING EN BANC yesterday, set for oral arguments on Sept. 26 the petition for a people's initiative to amend the Constitution filed by Sigaw ng Bayan and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines.

The Court also ordered the Commission on Elections and the Office of the Solicitor General to submit their comments within 10 days.

The OneVoice civic group promptly filed a petition asking the high court to junk the petition.

Lawyer Carlos Medina said there was no basis for the SC to reverse the Aug. 31 decision of the Comelec denying the Sigaw ng Bayan and Ulap petition.

He claimed that Republic Act 6735, or The Initiative and Referendum Act, was not sufficient to allow the exercise of a people's initiative.

Even assuming that RA 6735 was a sufficient enabling law, OneVoice said the scope of a people's initiative is limited to amendments and does not extend to revisions of the Constitution.

"[It] is clear that there is yet no enabling law sufficient to empower the people to directly propose amendments to the Constitution. It is also readily apparent from the provisions of Article 12 of the 1987 Constitution that there is a clear distinction between an amendment to and a revision of the Constitution, and that only Congress, acting as a constituent assembly, or a constitutional convention, can propose both amendments and revisions," said the group which is opposed to Charter change.

Sigaw-Ulap plea

Sigaw's Raul Lambino and Ulap's Erico Aumentado has also asked the SC to order the Comelec to comply with the provisions of Article 12 of the Constitution and set the date for a plebiscite on the amendments being proposed by its people's initiative petition.

They said the Comelec was bound by its constitutional duty to set the date of the plebiscite for the people to approve the proposed amendments since the Sigaw ng Bayan and Ulap have already secured the 6.3 million signatures needed to kick-start the amendment process.

In a related development, a law dean yesterday said there was "a new dimension" in the people's initiative filed by the Sigaw ng Bayan and Ulap that made the situation different from that of the petition junked by the Supreme Court in 1997.

Amado Valdez, dean of the University of the East College of Law, said the circumstances that led the Supreme Court to declare RA 6735 as insufficient in the *Santiago vs Comelec* case were totally different from the people's initiative petition filed by Lambino and Aumentado last Aug. 25 which the Comelec rejected last week.

Valdez said the petition of Ulap and Sigaw ng Bayan was accompanied by 6.3 million signatures that city and municipal election officers had reportedly verified as registered voters in 213 legislative districts.

He said the one submitted by petitioner Jesus Delfin nine years ago "was short of such signatures needed to set off this constitutional process of amending the 1987 Charter via the people's initiative."

"Delfin also committed a fatal mistake in asking the Comelec in his petition to set the time and date for the signature gathering, in violation of the spirit of this constitutional process that it should purely be a people's initiative without any government involvement or funding," Valdez said.

By contrast, the petition submitted by Lambino and Aumentado only asked the Comelec to set a plebiscite within 60 to 90 days to ratify the proposed parliamentary shift because it had already completed the signature-gathering activity, he said.

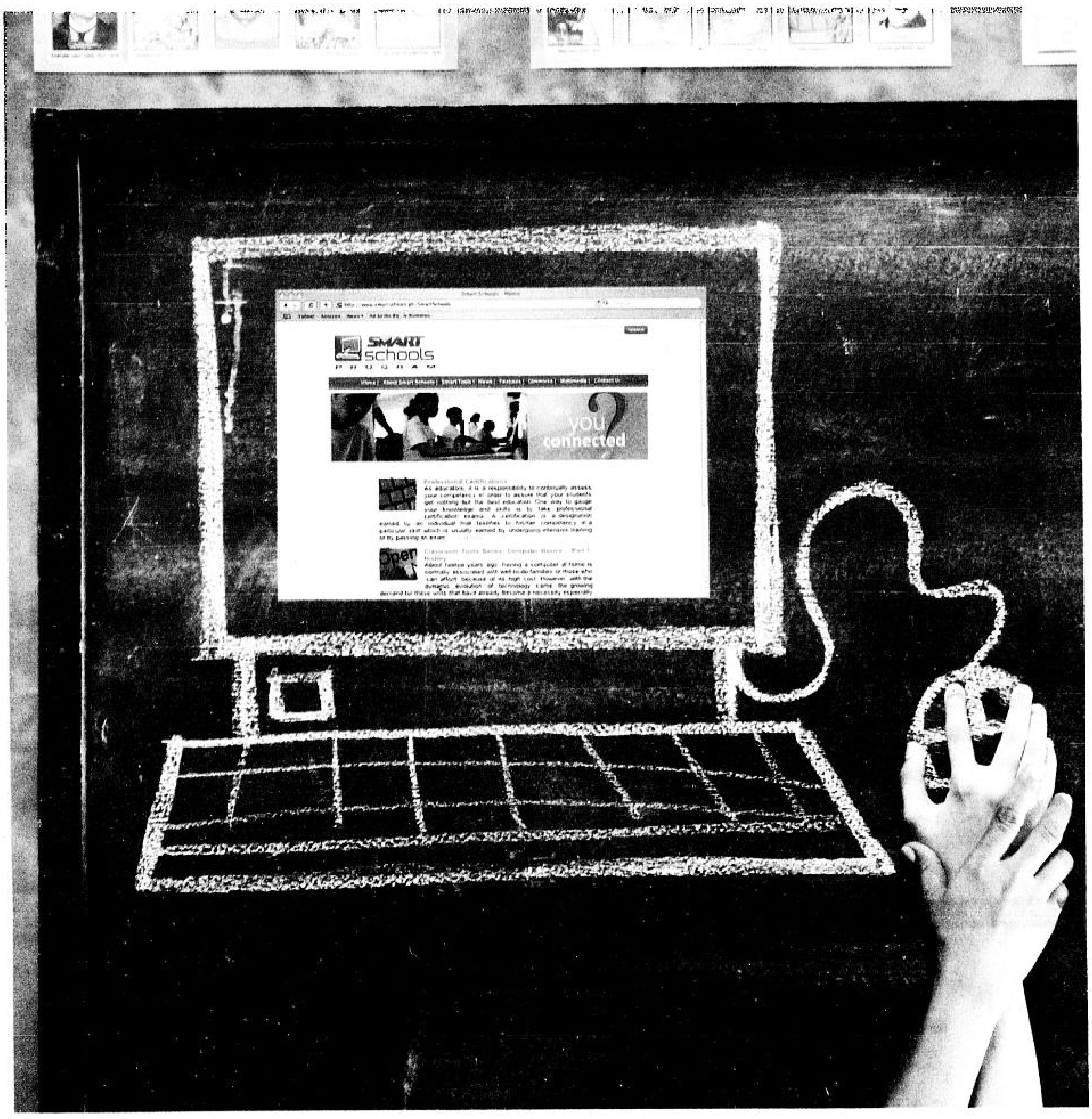
Valdez said the subjects of the two petitions were also different. While the new one is seeking a shift in the form of government, the Delfin petition sought to amend the Charter to lift the term limits of elective officials.

"(This) was questionable because this proposed amendment would have benefited incumbent officials at the time, had the initiative pushed through," Valdez said.

The Supreme Court was deadlocked in *Santiago vs Comelec*. The case ended in a 6-6 vote, with two justices inhibiting themselves from the proceedings and another abstaining from the voting.

Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban and Senior Associate Justice Reynato Puno are the only justices who took part in *Santiago vs Comelec* still remaining in the high court.

The two justices issued dissenting opinions that RA 6735 was sufficient to carry out a people's initiative, Valdez said.



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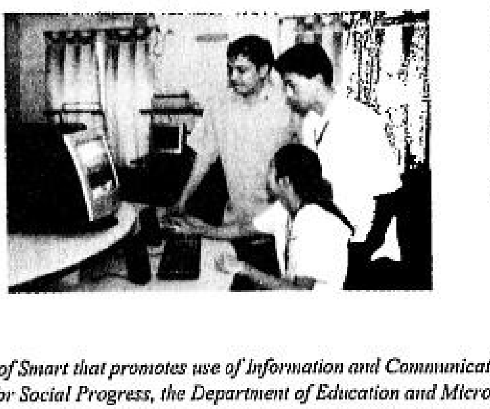

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Editor **Ester G. Dipasupil**

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Pasay has new (acting) local executives

Trinidad agrees to leave City Hall; claims oath-taking 'illegal'

By Norman Bordadora and Jocelyn R. Uy

PASAY MAYOR WENCESLAO "PEEWEE' Trinidad yesterday promised to leave City Hall and turn over his post, through Interior Undersecretary Wencelito Andanar, to Councilor Allan Panaligan, who was sworn in yesterday by Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno as acting mayor.

Another councilor, Arvin Tolentino, was sworn in as acting vice mayor. The two took their oath before Puno at the Department of the Interior and Local Government central office in Quezon City as Trinidad and 11 other officials continued to hole up at the Pasay City Hall.

Thousands of the mayor's supporters have been holding nightly vigils in front of the building since Friday night, when the order from the Office of the Ombudsman suspending Trinidad and 11 other officials for six

PASAY/ A24

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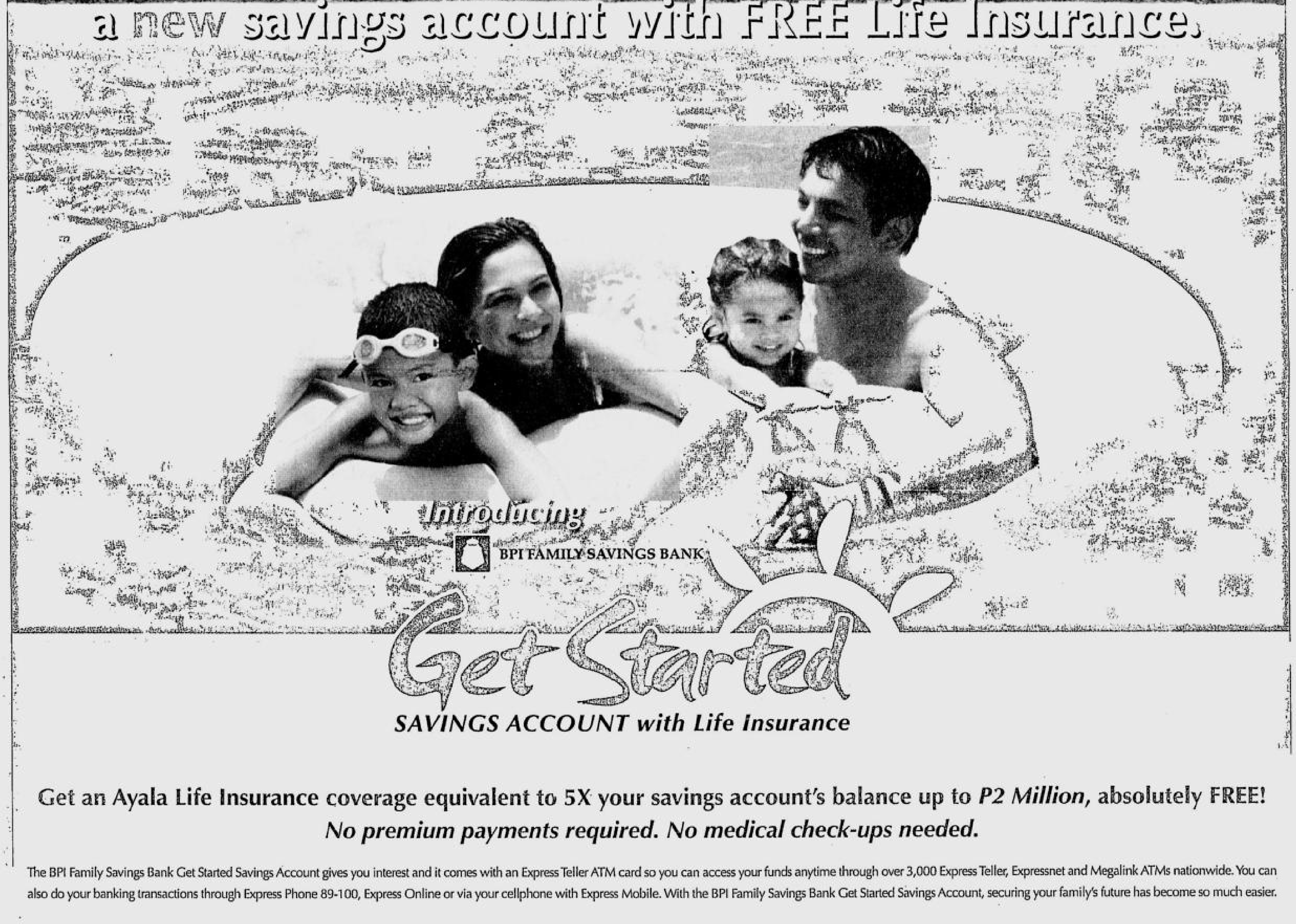

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Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

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PANGASIWAAN NG TUBIG AT ALKANTARILYA SA METRO MANILA
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CORPORATE OFFICE
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City 1105, Philippines

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1. The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, through MWSS Funds intends to apply the sum of Fifteen Million Pesos (P15,000,000.00) being the Approved budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for Contract No. MWTP-01. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Supply and Delivery of one (1) unit, Mobile/Transportable Emergency Water Treatment Plant, minimum production capacity of 4000 liters/hour (approximately 100m³/day). Contract period shall be 150 calendar days. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bider with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

   Office of the BAC Secretariat
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   MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road, Balara
   Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the above address and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of P2,500.00 starting September 7, 2006. The method of payment will be cash or Manager's Check payable to MWSS. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested parties on **October 3, 2006** at 10:00 a.m. at the above address.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the above address on or before 2:00 p.m. on **October 17, 2006**. The official timer for purposes of determining the official time shall be that of the clock located at the office of the MWSS Secretariat.
8. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following forms or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency.

Form of Security	Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to Bid
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)
2. Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1½%)
3. Surety Bond	Two and a half percent (2½%)

9. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
10. Bid opening shall be on **October 17, 2006** at 2:30 p.m. at the above mentioned address. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
11. The MWSS reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

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Administrator Orlando C. Hondrade
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Tel. No./Fax No. (632) 922-2568 / (632) 920-2439

(Sgd.) ORLANDO C. HONDRADE
Administrator

(PDI - Sept. 6 & 13, 2006)

Imelda travel okayed by court

By Margaux C. Ortiz

A MANILA REGIONAL TRIAL COURT JUDGE yesterday granted former First Lady Imelda Marcos permission to go to Hong Kong for medical treatment despite objections from the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG).

Citing "humanitarian reasons," Judge Silvino Pampilo Jr. of the Manila RTC Branch 26 allowed Marcos to travel abroad from Sept. 5 to Oct. 5, 2006.

"The itinerary of travel shall cover Hong Kong, China and not to other places," Pampilo said.

He also ordered Marcos to post a travel bond of P320,000 or P10,000 for each of the 32 counts of alleged dollar-salting, violations of Central Bank regulations pending before the court.

The judge likewise instructed her to provide the court with a photocopy of her passport "with a stamp of arrival by the Bureau of Immigration" within five days after her return.

Mrs. Marcos had filed an urgent motion for leave to travel abroad last Aug. 31 before Pampilo's court, saying she needed to travel to Hong Kong to seek alternative medical treatment for her hips and knee problems.

The former first lady is facing a string of civil and criminal charges before the court in connection with her husband's $683 million Swiss bank deposits, and needs the court's permission to travel abroad.

'Firing ISM official was a tough decision'

By Jocelyn R. Uy and Daxim L. Lucas

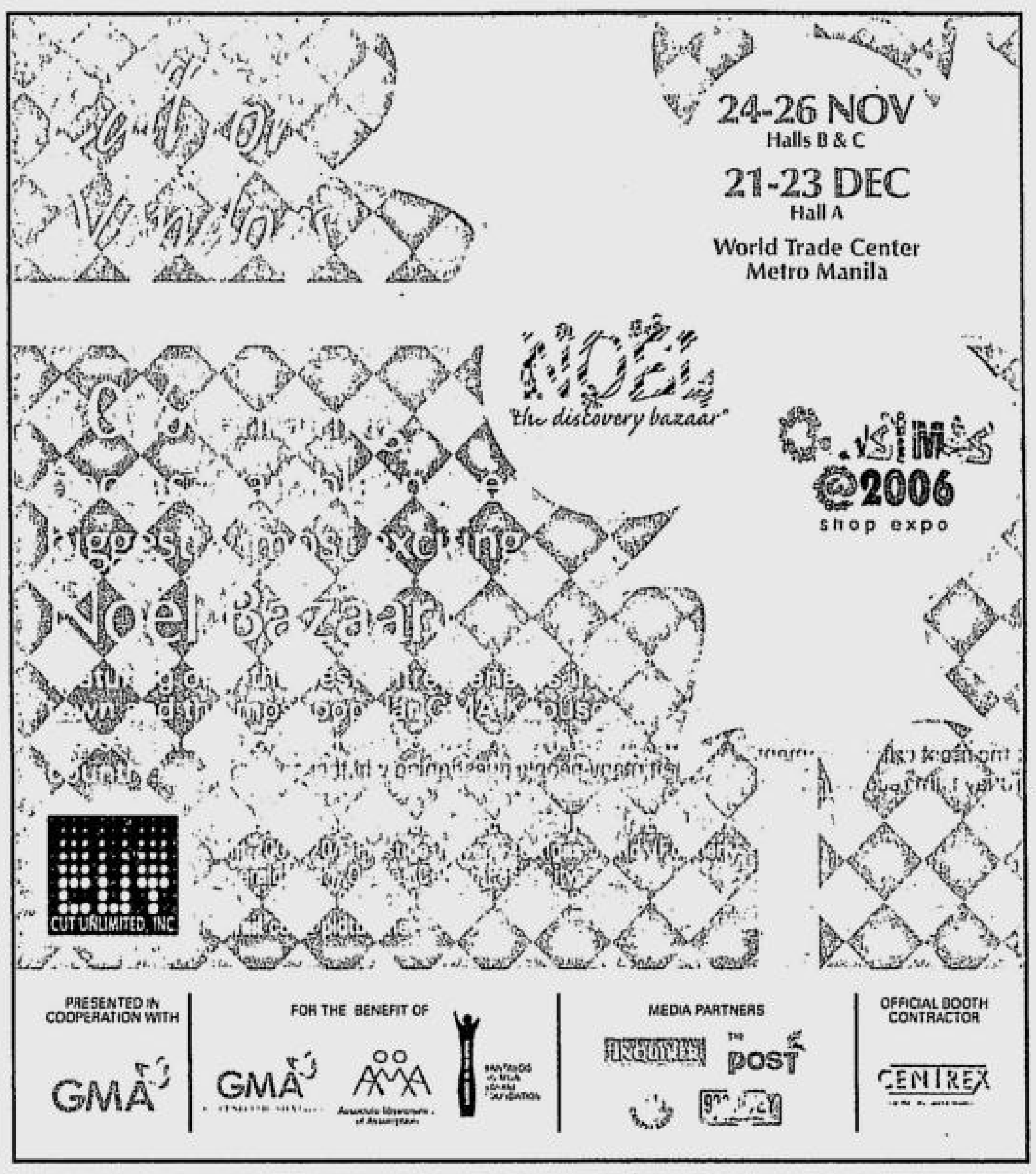
RELIEVING THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE International School Manila (ISM) in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, was a difficult decision that the board of trustees had to make, a board member said yesterday.

A group of concerned stakeholders at the school, however, is contemplating taking legal action to replace the board of directors should a proposed dialogue between both groups fail to break an impasse. "There are legal means," ISM parent-teacher association leader Dina Paterno said in a telephone interview. "We are preparing this very carefully." However, everything will still depend on the results of the dialogue which was set yesterday afternoon.

ISM superintendent David Toze was relieved on Monday after the board realized that "there needs to be an effective, harmonious communications link between the board and the operational organization," said the source who declined to be identified. Toze was relieved two days after his contract was renewed by the board. "It was a tough decision. But it was not done as if we just woke up that day wanting to fire him. The decision was made with multiple parties, with previous board members and officers," said the board member.

He also belied other news reports that Toze was taken out of the school by armed escorts on Monday. He said Toze was accompanied by the school security director, who was his friend, adding that reports about teachers planning a walkout were also not true.

The board had previously been accused of lacking in transparency and of using their positions to pursue personal interests. The school stakeholders, however, took a hardline stance after the board fired Toze. In an e-mail posted on a website and sent to ISM president Gracita Gilda Bocanegra, Wilfred Uytengsu, a member of a group of parents opposed to the board said: "It is a matter of time before more parents will be aware of the negligence and incompetence of the current board."



METROBRIEFS

500 houses lost in fire

LIZA Fernandez, 35 and her family were watching television in their house in the middle of a crowded community in Pasig City yesterday afternoon when the screen started blinking. Minutes later, an explosion too place. Members of the family rushed upstairs and saw the ceiling of the upper floor already on fire, according to FO1 Salvador Norberte. More than 50 houses were razed during the two-hour fire which broke out in Barangay Santolan. Norberte estimated the total structural damages at P1 million. Fernandez sustained first degree burns on her arms and legs as she tried to save some of their belongings, Norberte also told the INQUIRER. Fire officials said the fire broke out in the house on Concepcion Street at 1:46 p.m. It was placed under control at 3:58 p.m. Norberte said he would still conduct a follow up investigation to determine what triggered the fire, although he said that based on witnesses' accounts, it could be electricity-related.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Tribute to teachers

THE BIGGEST gathering of teachers will take place on Sept. 9 when Bato Balani Foundation Inc. (BBFI) presents "A Tribute to Teachers," from 1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City. The event was initiated by BBFI, a nonprofit foundation which aims to help improve the quality of education through teacher training and empowerment programs with the support of Diwa Learning Systems Inc. "The program is envisioned to highlight the selfless and noble nature of teachers, not only as educators but as community leaders," said Saturnino G. Belen, BBFI chair. Speakers include Dr. Denis Waitley, founding director of the National Council of Self-Esteem of the United States of America, Francis Kong of Business Matters Values Foundation, and Sandy Prieto of the Philippine Daily Inquirer. The event is produced by Salt and Light Ventures and organized with the support of Pizza Hut and PDI. For more information, log on to www.diwa.ph.

Pasay has new (acting) ...

From page A23

months, was announced.

Trinidad, however, asked Andanar, who was tasked by Puno to serve the suspension order yesterday, that he be given time to pack his things.

"I asked him to give me more time to bring my stuff when I leave the office. That's when I requested him to preserve the peace and order situation here in the city," the mayor said.

He stressed, however, that the oathtaking done at the DILG office was illegal. "I do not recognize that because I have not even received a copy of the order from the DILG," Trinidad said.

Trinidad, Vice Mayor Antonio Calixto and 10 city councilors were ordered suspended for allegedly entering into questionable contacts for garbage collection and disposal in 2004 and 2005.

Puno, meanwhile, issued an appeal to Trinidad's supporters to allow the city's officers in charge to carry out their duties and responsibilities. A crowd remained in front of City Hall yesterday. "I appeal to those at City Hall and in the streets to leave the area. I appeal for calm," he said.

Suspended along with Trinidad and Calixto were Councilors Richard Advincula, Lexter Ibay, Jose Antonio Roxas, Ma. Antonia Cuneta, Noel Bayona, Arnel Arceo, Editha Vergel de Dios, Marie Irish Pineda, Generosa Cuneta and Greg Paolo Alcera.

Only four councilors were not covered by the order, among them Panaligan and Tolentino. Panaligan was named acting mayor because he got the most votes among the four remaining councilors.

Puno said the DILG would conduct consultations with representatives of various sectors in Pasay City to come up with a list of recommended acting councilors.

Trinidad had informed Puno the other day that he intends to bring his case to the Court of Appeals.

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Mexican court to declare winner of presidential vote

MEXICO CITY—AFTER TWO months of political turmoil, Mexico's electoral court will declare Tuesday a winner of the bitterly contested presidential vote, almost certainly handing conservative Felipe Calderon the presidential sash.

The Federal Electoral Tribunal announced Monday that it would finally declare a victor of the July 2 balloting, the closest in Mexican history. Preliminary results put Calderon on top.

The announcement will end uncertainty about the election, but is not likely to end protests by losing leftist candidate Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, the popular former Mexico City mayor who has charged fraud in the ballot counting.

Lopez Obrador has called for the election to be annulled, insisted he would not recognize Calderon as president, and indicated he might form a parallel government.

On Monday, Lopez Obrador's supporters rejected outright the idea of a dialogue with Calderon.

"The only possibility for a dialogue with the right's candidate (Calderon), would be for him to refuse the gift of the presidency which he did not earn at the ballot box," said Gerardo Fernandez Norona, spokesperson for Lopez Obrador's Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD).

Lopez Obrador's backers set up a tent city in central Mexico City, and he has camped out since July 31 in the Zocalo square in a yellow tent facing the presidential palace.

The encampment has blocked a major thoroughfare for weeks, disrupting traffic and business in the Mexican capital at an estimated cost of 364 million dollars and 5,000 jobs, according to business leaders associated with Calderon's National Action Party (PAN).

Lopez Obrador has declared plans to lead a protest downtown on Mexico's independence day, September 16.

Authorities have urged his supporters — and particularly the 126 legislators of his party in Mexico's parliament -- to accept defeat, which will allow a peaceful handover of the presidency on December 1.

However, the current president, Vicente Fox, also of PAN, Monday rejected the use of the army to remove the protesters.

"Democracy has not allowed and will never, never allow, the use of the army against the public," he told a group of cadets.

For his part, Calderon insists he won the vote fair and square, albeit by the narrowest of margins. International observers also deemed the election free and fair.

Calderon defeated Lopez Obrador by just 239,751 votes, a margin of just 0.57 percent with some 41.7 million votes cast.

The seven-judge election tribunal faced a Wednesday deadline to certify the vote and name the president-elect—a decision which cannot be appealed. *AFP*

IRWIN AFP

Tributes for 'Crocodile Hunter'

SYDNEY—TRIBUTES FLOODED in from across the globe Tuesday for legendary Australian "Crocodile Hunter" Steve Irwin a day after he died in a freak stingray attack that was captured on film.

As fans and media mourned the death of the irrepressible naturalist who became Australia's best-known ambassador, the premier of northeastern Queensland state, where Irwin lived and died, offered him a state funeral.

Australian movie star Russell Crowe, Prime Minister John Howard and Foreign Minister Alexander Downer meanwhile joined thousands of stunned fans in paying homage to Irwin, who died when a stingray's barb pierced his heart as he filmed an underwater documentary on Monday.

Newspapers around the world carried front-page reports on Irwin's grisly death at the age of 44 and on his life as a passionate environmental crusader and global media star.

"He was the Australian we all aspire to be," Irwin's friend Crowe said from New York in comments widely reported by the Australian media. "He was and remains the ultimate wildlife warrior.

"I believed in him. I'll miss him," the Oscar-winning star of such films as "Gladiator" and "A Beautiful Mind" said of Irwin, who is believed to have died instantly.

The attack as Irwin snorkeled about one meter (three feet) above the ray in shallow water off the town of Port Douglas was caught on film by a cameraman who was swimming ahead of the creature, police and Irwin's producers said. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Militant gets 8 years

BALI— Judges sentenced an Islamic militant to eight years in prison Tuesday for harboring the alleged mastermind of suicide bombings that killed 20 people on Indonesia's resort island of Bali — the first verdict in the terrorist attack. Abdul Aziz, 30, shouted "God is great!" and threw his arms around his lawyer after the ruling was read in the tightly guarded Denpasar District Court. Aziz is one of four men charged in the attacks, all accused of helping hide Southeast Asia's most wanted terrorist Noordin Top or helping transport explosives. Verdicts for the other three are expected by next week. *AP*

9 arrested in Denmark

COPENHAGEN—Police in central Denmark early Tuesday arrested nine people suspected of plotting a terror attack after they allegedly acquired material to build explosives, the intelligence service said. The sweep was carried out at 2 a.m. in Vollsmose, a mostly immigrant suburb west of Odense, Denmark's third-largest city. Lars Findsen, the head of the Danish Security Intelligence Service, said the suspects "had acquired material ... to build explosives in connection with the preparation of a terror act." He said the suspects — both ethnic Danes and people with immigrant backgrounds aged between 18 and 33 — would face a custody hearing later Tuesday. *AP*

Worst is over – Castro

HAVANA—Cuban leader Fidel Castro said the worst is over and he is recovering well from intestinal surgery one month ago despite losing 41 lbs (18.6 kg), a statement published on Tuesday said. "One can say that the most critical moment is behind us. Today I am recovering at a satisfactory pace," he said in the statement published by the government newspaper Granma's Web site, with photographs of him reading in a rocking chair. *Reuters*

Nasa clears Atlantis

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla.— Nasa managers have cleared space shuttle Atlantis for a launch attempt on Wednesday after a week's delay due to a lightning strike and a storm, officials with the U.S. space agency said on Monday. Atlantis' liftoff is targeted for 12:29 p.m. (1629 GMT) on Wednesday at the Kennedy Space Center in central Florida. Managers are also prepared to make launch attempts on Thursday and Friday if the weather or technical problems prevent liftoff on Wednesday. *Reuters*

Nato jets kill Canadian

KABUL—One Canadian soldier was killed by friendly fire and several were wounded on Monday during a major offensive to crush a resurgent Taliban in southern Afghanistan. The troops were strafed by two Nato warplanes after calling in air support during a battle with Taliban fighters in Kandahar province, the alliance said in a statement. The fatality was Canada's fifth combat death in this operation. David Wilkins, the US ambassador to Ottawa, expressed "deep regret" over the incident. "There will be a full and thorough investigation and we will share the results of that investigation." *Reuters*

Parole for Suharto son

JAKARTA—In 2002, the super rich son of former dictator Suharto was sentenced to 15 years in prison in the murder of judge, a verdict hailed as a watershed in Indonesia's battle to create a legal system capable of punishing the powerful. But this month — just four years later — Tommy Suharto is due for release on parole. The speed in which Tommy has served his sentence has left many people questioning whether anything has changed in the legal system since pro-democracy riots forced his father to step down in 1998 after 32 years of corrupt and brutal rule. *AP*

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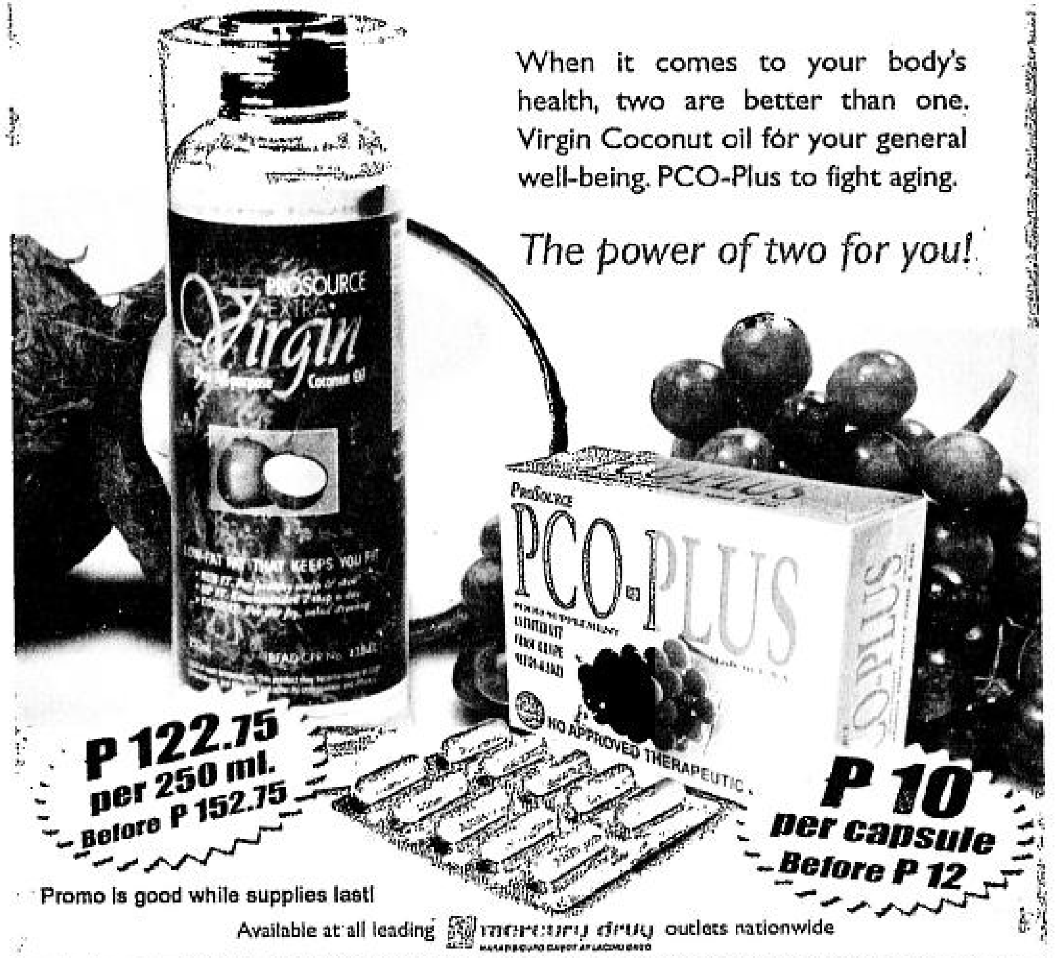

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UN to mediate prisoner release talks

JEDDAH—UN CHIEF KOFI ANNAN SAID MONDAY that Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah which fought a fierce month-long war have accepted United Nations mediation on two captured Israeli soldiers.

"Both parties have accepted the good offices of the secretary general to help resolve this problem," he told a press conference in the Red Sea city of Jeddah after talks with Saudi leaders.

"I will work with the parties and I will designate someone to work discreetly and quietly with them to find a solution," he said. "I will not even tell you the name of the person ... because I want him to be able to work discreetly." Annan stressed that "the only (thing) I insisted on is that if I am going to use my good offices, then my mediator should be the only mediator. If others get involved, we will pull out because you would get wires crossed." The Shiite guerrilla group Hezbollah's capture of the two Israeli soldiers on July 12 sparked a massive Israeli onslaught against Lebanon until a ceasefire under UN Resolution 1701 took effect on Aug. 14. Hezbollah demands Israel's release of Lebanese prisoners in exchange for the soldiers.

In Israel, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's spokesperson Miri Eisin reacted swiftly to Annan's announcement to distance the Jewish state from any agreement with Hezbollah on a negotiating process.

"Israel does not agree on anything together with Hezbollah. Israel sees the Lebanese government and the UN, within the framework of Resolution 1701, as the only ones responsible for the unconditional release of the kidnapped soldiers," she told AFP.

In Beirut, US civil rights leader Jesse Jackson who has also travelled to Israel and Syria on what he termed a humanitarian mission said the Jewish state "wants physical evidence that its two soldiers are alive.

"It could by video footage, a picture, or a credible third party like the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) for example," he said.

"It will release a lot of tension and ease the other issues like the embargo," he added, referring to Israel's air and sea blockade which has been in force since the onset of the conflict.

Annan did not give more details, but his spokesperson Ahmad Fawzi told AFP that the secretary general has "always said we must address the issue of all prisoners, but this particular mediation is focused on the abducted soldiers." The spokesperson did not rule out an eventual swap, although he would not go into details.

Annan, who was speaking at a joint news conference with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal, also said a UN force to help the Lebanese army consolidate the fragile ceasefire and extend its authority throughout south Lebanon should be in place by mid-September.

AFP

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US, Iraq near handover of command

BAGHDAD—THE UNITED STATES AND Iraq hope to sign an agreement by next week to hand operational command of Iraq's new army to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, Iraq said on Monday, after wrangles on wording had held up the accord.

A day after the government hailed the arrest of al-Qaida in Iraq's purported deputy head as a coup against insurgents, the bodies of 33 men, some with their hands bound and bearing signs of torture, were found in Baghdad, and foreign forces announced the death of four Americans and two British soldiers.

South of the capital, the US-trained Iraqi army said it killed 14 suspected insurgents who had been plotting to attack Shiite pilgrims, a popular tactic by Sunni militants whom US and Iraqi officials accuse of spreading sectarian civil war.

A player for one of Iraq's biggest soccer clubs was kidnapped by gunmen in Baghdad just days before he was due to sign a transfer to a Syrian club, an Iraqi official said.

Transferring security from US forces to the Iraqi army it is training is key to Washington's plans to withdraw its 140,000 troops. A handover ceremony set for Saturday was delayed over disagreements between Baghdad and Washington over the wording of a document outlining their armies' new relationship.

Denying there had ever been serious disagreement, government spokesperson Ali al-Dabbagh told Reuters: "Both sides have agreed on the main issues. I think the document is ready to be signed, probably by the end of this week or early next week." He said all remaining disagreements were "technicalities." The agreement, which the US military says is a key step toward Iraq taking responsibility for its security, lays out a gradual transfer of command from US forces to Iraqi units.

Reuters

Japan awaits royal birth

TOKYO—JAPAN'S PRINCESS KIKO WILL give birth on Wednesday, with many hoping for a baby boy who would become a long-awaited male heir—and end for now a battle over whether a woman can sit on the throne.

Newspapers prepared extra editions and bridal and baby-related companies prepared to do brisk business once the 39-year-old princess gives birth on Wednesday by Caesarean section.

PRINCESS KIKO AP

"I hope it will be a boy. Either way, I hope the baby will be fine," Justice Minister Seiken Sugiura told a news conference.

If Kiko has a boy, it will be the first male heir of the world's oldest monarchy to be born since her own husband Akishino in 1965.

"This is a cause for celebration regardless of the baby's sex," said Haruo Masuda, a 75-year-old strolling in central Tokyo.

"But I would prefer a baby boy because it is better to keep a male lineage, which Japan made efforts to preserve for such a long time," he said.

Kiko's pregnancy was a dream come true for conservatives as it led Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, who steps down later this month, to drop his plans to introduce female succession.

Kiko, a housewife, has two children, both girls, who were born in 1991 and 1994.

Crown Prince Naruhito and Crown Princess Masako have had one child, four-year-old Princess Aiko, in more than 13 years of marriage.

The US-educated Masako, who gave up a promising career as a diplomat to marry Naruhito, has suffered mental problems due to pressure to produce a male heir and to adapt to the tradition-bound monarchy.

Opinion polls showed most Japanese supported female succession before Kiko's pregnancy in part out of sympathy for Masako, who rarely appears in public.

AFP

WHAT'S INSIDE

Tiger bags fifth straight trophy /A28

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SAN Beda's Samuel Ekwe drives past Letran's Bryan Faundo in their first-round game. ERIK ARAZAS

Knights eye semis 'bonus'

Dolphins also in contention for twice-to-beat edge

SAN BEDA WILL BE STANDING IN THE way of defending champion Letran's bid for the twice-to-beat semifinal incentive today at the close of the NCAA men's basketball eliminations at the Araneta Coliseum.

Philippine Christian and Mapua mix it up in the first varsity game at 2 p.m.

Whatever happens, the Red Lions and the Cardinals have already clinched the No. 1 and No. 4 positions, respectively.

The only things that could change are the middle positions in the Final Four, and whichever team nails the twice-to-beat bonus when the semifinals begin on Sept. 13.

San Beda and Letran clash at 4 p.m. with the Red Lions riding the crest of their 11-game winning streak, including a 57-49 victory over Letran in the first round.

"We worked so hard to get into this position and we are looking at making things easier for us in the semis," said San Beda coach Koy Banal.

The Knights are coming off a two-game losing spell and are raring to get back at their tormentors.

"We have to focus on the small things, we need to hustle more and work harder on defense," said Letran coach Louie Alas. "We are now the underdogs and that could work to our advantage."

If Letran loses and PCU wins, they will end up tied in second place and square off in a rubber match Friday also at the Big Dome.

The Dolphins are favored against the Cardinals despite losing the first time around (59-48). That's because the Dolphins are fresh off back-to-back victories, and the Cardinals will miss Joferson Gonzales, who is serving a one-game suspension for hitting SBC's Samuel Ekwe in a recent game.

Marc Anthony Reyes

STANDINGS	W	L
x San Beda	12	1
y Letran	10	3
y PCU	9	4
y Mapua	7	6
Perpetual	5	9
Jose Rizal	4	10
SSC-R	4	10
St. Benilde	3	11

x--Clinched twice-to-beat
y--Clinched Final Four

GAMES TODAY

12 nn—SBC vs Letran (Jrs)
2 p.m.—PCU vs Mapua
4 p.m.—SBC vs Letran

SSC-Cavite faces Naascu ax for defaulting matches

By Marc Anthony Reyes

LASCUÑA

LEAGUE-LEADER SAN SEBASTIAN-CAVITE faces outright expulsion as the National Athletic Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Naascu) convenes its board today to discuss the team's recent actions.

The Bay Cats, who dominated the league's first round of eliminations right in their first season, defaulted their first five games in the second in "protest" against the one-year ban imposed on coach Egay Macaraya for fighting on the court.

Naascu president Dr. Ernest Jay Adalem of St. Clare said they had invited SSC-Cavite officials to today's meeting to explain why the Baby Cats failed to show up for their recent games.

"We haven't received any communication from them, not even a formal letter after we imposed the suspension on coach Macaraya," Adalem told the INQUIRER. "If they are contesting our decision… they should inform us through a letter so we can respond accordingly."

But SSC-Cavite officials maintained that they already forwarded a letter pleading for a "lesser penalty" on Macaraya, who was penalized for punching AMA Computer player Jun Gabica during their game on Aug. 18 at the New Era Gym.

Adalem said Macaraya's action "reflected badly on the league as well as on their school."

Macaraya didn't explain his side in the punching incident but asked the league for permission to be allowed into game venues.

SSC-C president Fr. Emil Jaruda said they didn't intend to lose all their games by default.

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Lascuña qualifies for rich S'pore tilt

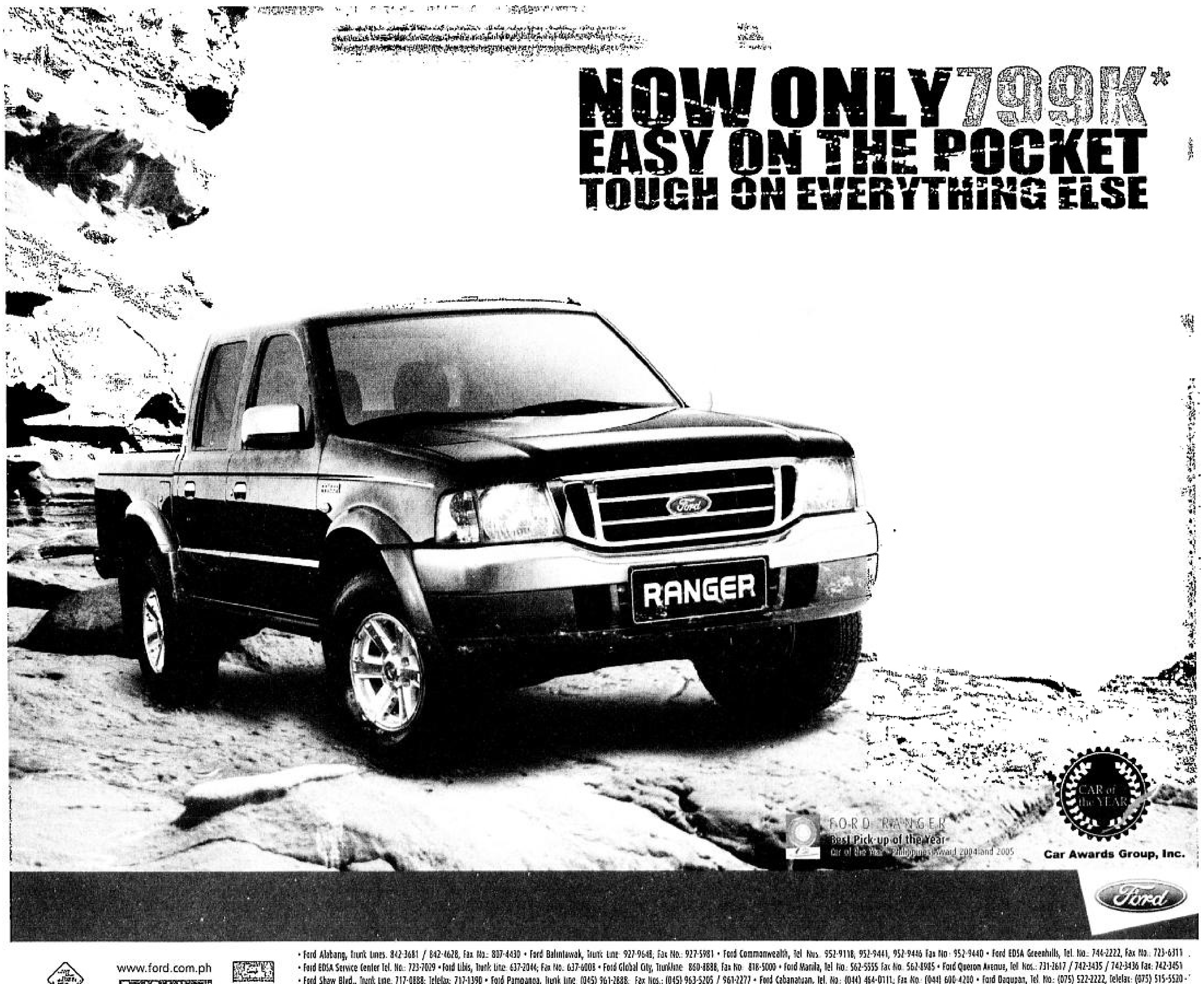
FILIPINO TONY LASCUÑA and New Zealand's Matt Holten fired identical five-under-par 67s Tuesday and led the second round's five qualifiers into the $3 million Barclays Singapore Open at Sentosa Golf Club's Tanjong course.

Lascuña, the only Filipino to make the tournament proper as a "rabbit," joins outright qualifiers-Frankie Miñoza, Juvic Pagunsan and Angelo Que in the chase for big cash prizes in one of the Asian Tour's richest stops.

Japan's Tomoo Bise and the amateur duo of Quincy Quek of Singapore and South African Chris Joseph also qualified with similar 68s.

Lascuña, Holten, Bise, Quek and the Singapore-based Joseph earned the right to tee up alongside Adam Scott of Australia, South African Ernie Els and Asia's best, including Jeev Milkha Singh of India and Thailand's Thaworn Wiratchant.

Filipinos Artemio Murakami and Cookie La'O failed to survive Tuesday's qualifying round, as did compatriots Luis Dacudao, Kevin Tayao and Mars Pucay who missed the cut on Monday.



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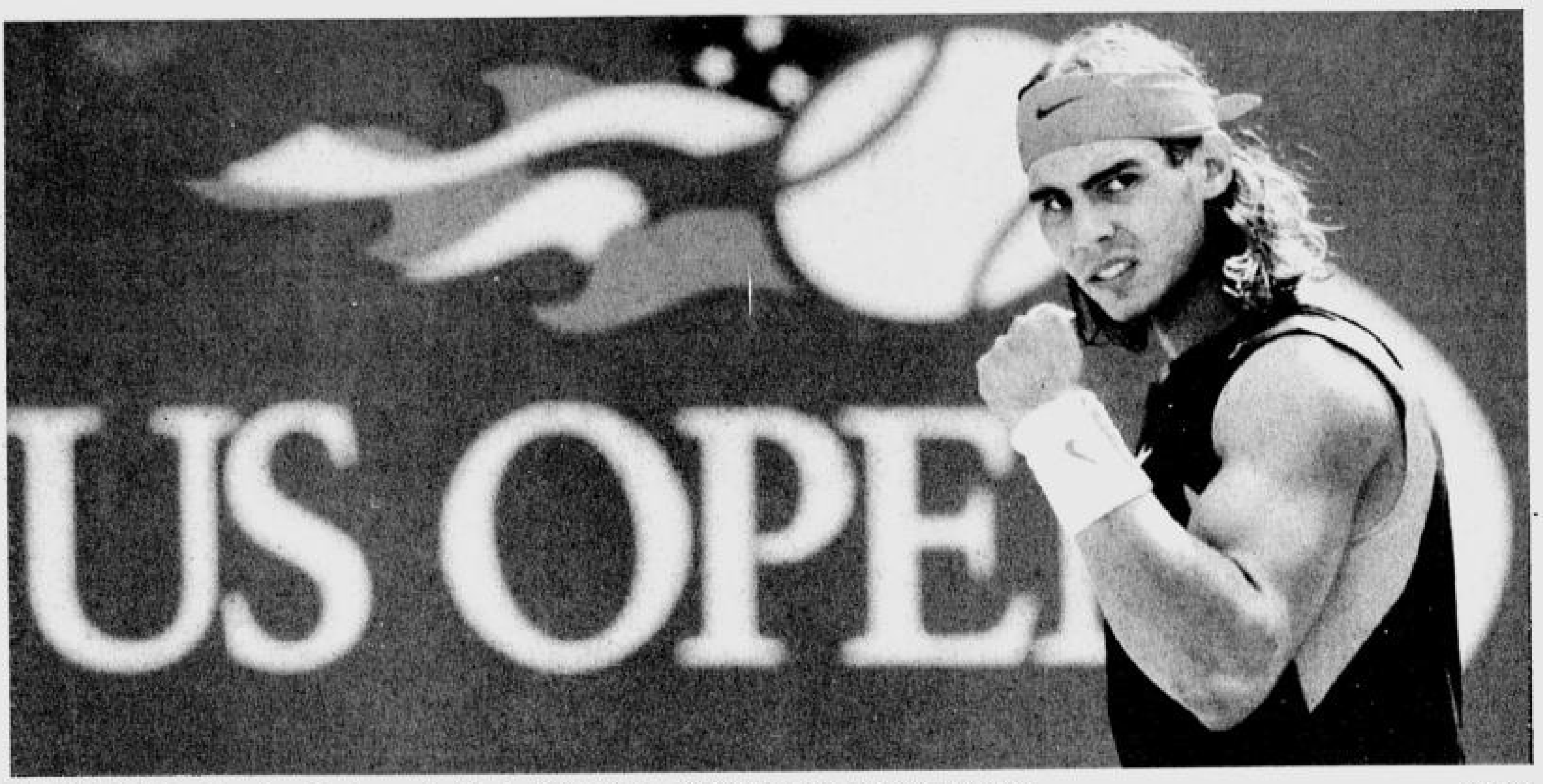


RAFAEL Nadal celebrates winning a point during his match against Czech Republic's Jiri Novak. REUTERS

Amelie stumps Serena

Roddick points Agassi-beater to the exits

NEW YORK—GASPING FOR BREATH AFTER long exchanges, Serena Williams ran out of energy and answers against Amelie Mauresmo.

In a showdown between two women who've been ranked No. 1 and own a total of nine Grand Slam titles, the top-seeded Mauresmo won nine of the last 12 points Monday night to beat the unseeded Williams, 6-4, 0-6, 6-2, and reach the US Open quarterfinals.

"I could have come out on top had I made a few more shots and had I just been a little bit more consistent," said Williams, who didn't think her recent lack of matches was a factor. "Maybe a little bit more fire or something."

Williams, a seven-time major winner and 9-1 against Mauresmo coming in, was superb in the second set. But the outcome turned at 3-2 in the final set, when a 35-stroke exchange ended with Williams pushing a backhand into the net, then pausing for air—something Mauresmo noticed.

That sent Mauresmo on her way to a key break, and Williams wouldn't win another game, saying later: "Just fell apart after that."

On match point, they engaged in a 24-stroke rally that Mauresmo ended with a sharply angled volley Williams couldn't get to in time.

"I don't think she picked up her game 1,000 percent or even that much," Williams said. "I just think that she cut back on the errors."

The US Open did indeed proceed without Andre Agassi, although a fan cried out, "Do it for Andre!" during Andy Roddick's fourth-round match.

Roddick obliged, putting together a 6-3, 6-4, 6-3 victory over Benjamin Becker, the German qualifier who ended Agassi's career the day before. No. 18 Robby Ginepri bowed out with a 7-6 (1), 6-4, 3-6, 3-6, 7-6 (1) loss to No. 14 Tommy Haas.

Haas next faces 2000 Open champion Marat Safin. Other past winners still in it are Lindsay Davenport and Justine Henin-Hardenne, who set up a quarterfinal clash with straight-set wins. But 2004 Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova is gone after losing to No. 19 Jelena Jankovic, 6-7 (5), 6-3, 6-2. Also into the quarterfinals were No. 3 Maria Sharapova—who lost the first three games before eliminating No. 24 Li Na of China 6-4, 6-2.

Roddick won the 2003 Open but lost in the first round last year, part of a dismal stretch that briefly dropped him out of the top 10. Now he has Jimmy Connors as his coach and a 10-match winning streak. *AP*

MARIA Sharapova plans to auction off her stunning black Audrey Hepburn-inspired outfit via the web. AP

Sharapova to auction outfit

NEW YORK—ALL SORTS OF THINGS ARE FOR sale at the US Open. T-shirts, visors, hats—even balls actually used in the tournament.

A store in the middle of the fan plaza also sells replicas of what some players wear. Maria Sharapova's lavender dress is $90. Serena Williams' outfit with Asian influences goes for $100.

But an item that draws a lot of inquiries—Sharapova's black cocktail-style dress, inspired by Audrey Hepburn—isn't on the shelves. Not yet, anyway.

Sharapova, however, plans to auction off some on her Web site. The proceeds would go to her new foundation, which supports at-risk children.

"Basically children that don't get the opportunity to do the things that they dream of and want to do," she said. "One of the greatest things about being an athlete and making money is realizing that you can help, help the world, especially children." *AP*

Tiger bags fifth straight trophy

NORTON, MASSACHUSETTS—Tiger Woods matched the lowest final round of his career Monday and won the Deutsche Bank Championship for his fifth straight victory.

Woods easily overcame a challenge from Vijay Singh, shooting an 8-under 63 and turning a three-shot deficit into a two-shot victory for his longest winning streak in a season.

The streak began in July with a victory in the British Open, his first since his father died in May. It continued on a sunny afternoon outside Boston with some of his best golf of the year and allowed him to avenge a loss to Singh at this tournament two years ago.

Woods needed only three holes to erase the deficit, including a 6-iron over a marsh and into 10 feet for eagle at No. 2. He pulled ahead with a 25-foot birdie putt at No. 5, and he seized control with a 3-wood from 266 yards, a shot into a gentle breeze that banged into the slope fronting the green and stopped 10 feet away for another eagle.

He played his first seven holes in 6 under par, and Singh never got closer than two shots the rest of the way.

Singh won two years ago to end Woods' five-year reign atop the world ranking. The 43-year-old Fijian closed with a 68, not his best golf but ordinarily enough to win with a three-shot lead in swirling breezes.

WOODS: High on five AP

"Tiger played unbelievable," Singh said. "He made two eagles and just took it away."

Byron Nelson won 11 straight tournaments in 1945, a streak regarded as one of the most untouchable in sports. Woods won six straight at the end of 1999 and the start of 2000, and Ben Hogan won six in a row in 1948.

Woods now takes a week off before heading to England for the HSBC World Match Play Championship, followed by the Ryder Cup. His next US PGA Tour start will be the American Express Championship outside London at the end of September.

Woods surpassed Nelson with his 53rd victory, fifth most in US PGA Tour history but 29 behind all-time leader Sam Snead. Woods, who finished at 16-under 268, won for the seventh time this year. *AP*

Anya, Bambee trail in Indonesia Open

JAKARTA—THE RP LADIES squad struggled on the putting surface of the Padang Golf Pondok Indah Golf Club as Anya Tanpinco and Bambee dela Paz shot identical five-over par 77s to trail Indons Ines Tjiptadi, Andani and Juriah by a stroke at the 28th Indonesia Ladies Amateur Open yesterday.

Already fazed by the layout's glass-top greens, the field struggled even more with testy pin placements, thus sending the scores soaring in the tournament which drew 80 participants from around the Asean region.

Tanpinco, third here last year, had three three-putts in a round of 40-37 while the 16-year-old Dela Paz managed nines of 36-41.

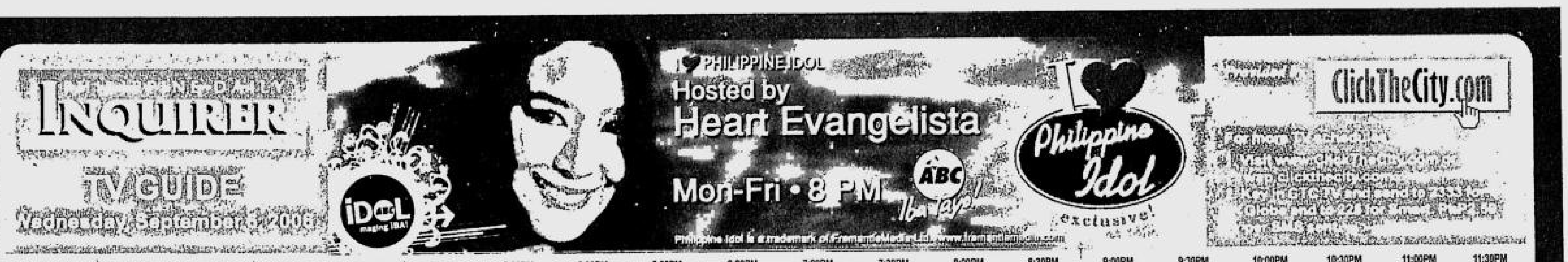
Those were one shot behind Tjiptadi and Andani, who both carded 38-38 rounds, and Junah (37-39), to pace the field.

Junior World champions Cyna Rodriguez and Dottie Ardina turned in 78 (38-40) and 79 (41-38), respectively, a pair of respectable rounds under such playing conditions.

"Some of our players made 4 or 5 putts while other players had 8 and even 9 putts," said Bong Lopez, the head coach of the three-squad RP delegation, whose stint here is sponsored by the International Container Terminal Services, Inc. (ICTSI) as part of the team's buildup for next month's World Amateurs and the Asian Games in Doha in December.

INQUIRER TV GUIDE

Wednesday, September 6, 2006



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ABS-CBN 2		Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Yakitate Japan/ Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Calla Lily	Pangako Sa 'Yo	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Super Inggo	Bituing Walang Ningning	Pinoy Dream Academy	A Love To Kill		Bandila	Probe	Mirada De Mujer
AXN		CSI: NY (Season 2)		David Blaine Magic Man		Ripley's Believe It or Not		Alias (Season IV)		The Amazing Race (Season IX)		Ultimate Guinness World Records	Samsung Sports World	World's Most Amazing Videos		CSI: Miami (Season 4)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 5)	
Cartoon Network	Pixie & Dixie/ My Little Pony	All New Popeye Show	I am Weasel	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	The Simpsons	Samurai Jack/ Sayonara Samurai Jack	PokeMon	Dice	Gundam Seed Destiny/ Shaman King	The Simpsons/ Courage The Cowardly Dog	Teen Titans/ The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Justice League Unlimited/ The Simpsons	The Batman/ Aqua Teen Hunger Force/ Sealab 2021	X-Men Evolution/ Gundam Seed	Static Shock/ Shaman King
Cinemax	Charade (2:25PM)			Lone Star (4:15 PM)					Blind Side (6:25 PM)			My New Gun			Killing Time (9:40PM)			Dawn Of The Dead (11:05PM)	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Cold Case		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	I, Detective	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit							
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-Talkative Bunny	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			American Dragon	Buzz on Maggie	Buzz on Maggie	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN				NFL's Greatest Moments		Pro Billiards '06 Enjoypool.com Women's Open 9-Ball C'ships		Women's Pro Billiards US WPBA Midwest Classic		Weetabix Women's British Open Day2				Sportscenter Asia	Classic Boxing: Great Fights of the early 30's		Classic Boxing: Great Fights of the Late 50's		Sportscenter Asia
ETC		America's Next Top Model 5		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Veronica Mars 2		Beauty And The Geek 2		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen (Degeneres) Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Cold Turkey 2		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	St. Thomas More Faithful Statesman	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	Faith In Motion	Truth In The Heart	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Suffering And The Love Of God	EWTN Catholic Classic	The Church & The Poor: Building Bridges	Mother Angelica Live Classics		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	One In Their Hearts: Holiness Of Priesthood	Parable	Rome Reports	Special Programming	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat	Now and Forever (3:15PM)	Ang Pagbabago (3:45 PM)		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Jewel In The Palace	24 Oras		Captain Barbell (7:10 PM)		Majika		I Luv NY (8:50 PM)	Love Of The Condor Heroes	Nuts Entertainment			Saksi
Hallmark Channel				Judging Amy		Sue Thomas F.B. Eye		McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Family Law		Judging Amy		McBride: Murder Past Midnight			
HBO	Vampires: The Turning			A Separate Peace			The Summer Of Ben Tyler			Little Black Book (7:15 PM)				Contact					The Bourne Supremacy
Hero TV	Gosaurer	Gundam Seed	Duel Masters	Super Gals	Mirmo de Pon	Sugar The Snow Fairy	Naruto	Inuyasha	Saiyuki Reload	Full Metal Panic	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	Transformers Armada	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	B'Daman Bakugaiden	Beyblade G-Revolution	Gosaurer	Gundam Seed	Naruto
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	EBC Earth Files		Japan Video Topics/ Arms		EBC Earth Files		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Arms	Up Close And Personal	IBC News Tonite		
JackTV		Raw				Cheat	Filter	Afterburn		Mad TV		That 70s Show	Arrested Development	Last Comic Standing		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Chappelle's Show	The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network		30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	DIY: Crafts	Iron Chef America		My Country, My Kitchen	E! Entertainment Special		Living Space	Martha		Fine Living Special		Intimate Portrait	
MTV Philippines		Homewrecker	Room Raiders	MTV Screen	MTV Hits					Get Spotted	MTV Screen	TRL		Homewrecker	Room Raiders	Get Hitch'd	Homecoming	MTV Live Orange & Lemons	
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXilog	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Live!		Band Of The Run	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXilog
National Geographic	Monkey Business	National Geographic Specials		Going to More Extremes: The Silk Route		Planet Wild	Amazing Moments	Top 5 - Dangerous Encounters	Top 5 - Dangerous Encounters	WOW! Animal Omens		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Outbreak Investigation: Return of the Speckled Monster		Crash Scene Investigation: Greek Ferry Disaster	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Alap.			Dyaryo Ko, Mahal Ko Ba Siya?	Teledyaryo W/ Ray Langit & Angelique Lazo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	In Focus	Euromaxx	Ang Mga Nagsi-Alis Sa Daang Dati		Ang Pagbubuyag		News Beat (Live)		OpenLine Live	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	Ang Mga Nagsi-Alis Sa Daang Dati		Ang Tamang Daan		World Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal News	Tomorrow Today
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	SpongeBob SquarePants	Rocket Power	Four Eyes/Upside Down Show/Rugrats: Preschool Daze/Chalkzone/Big Blow Up	SpongeBob SquarePants/ Right On Top	My Life As A Teenage Robot	All Grown Up	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	Romeo	Naturally Sadie	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Manchichinichit				Ang Kaso Ng [illegible] Mga Bangkay				Nonoy Zuniga Concert				Grease Gun Gang				Sa Huling Paghihintay
Qtv	Love Revolution	Shaman King	Outlaw Star	Galaxy Angel	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Phoenix	Irene		Sorry I Love You		Now Na!		News On Q	Balikbayan		Irene
RPN 9	TV Shopping				Kapatid Show	RPN Aksyon News		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Iro Chef		Three Wishes		Extreme Make-Over		Newswatch Now	Carga For Truth		Kerygma
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Sony Music Video		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports				The MBC Celebrity Billiards Tour				Beach Volleyball: FIVB Women's-France		Sagupaan	GWS 33-2006	Philippine Open '06: Mad Finals - PHI v THA		Phil 9-Ball Open '06		Solar Sports Desk	NBA Access	Beach Volleyball: FIVB Women's-France	
Sports Plus			Inside the PGA	Party Poker.com World Open 2005				NASCAR Sony 500 California										U.S. Open '06 Day 10 Men's & Women's QFinal	
Star Movies	America's Sweethearts				Swept Away (4:20 PM)			Flubber (5:55 PM)			The Triangle - Ep 01			The Devil's Own				Soul Assassin (10:50PM)	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Monk		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	Rockstar Supernova		Boston Legal (9:10 PM)		NCIS		Seinfeld	Rockstar Supernova
Studio 23								Blog	Pinoy Dream Academy	Wazzup Wazzup	CSI	24 (8:15 PM)		It's A Guy Thing		News Central	Oprah (10:45PM)		Men's Room

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Kings favorites, says Guiao

By June Navarro

THE RED BULL BARAKOS LOOK GOOD FOR another title run.

Reserves Leo Najorda and Paolo Bugia provided the finishing touches as the Barakos held off the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals, 101-91, last night in the PBA Pre-Season mini tournament at the JSCGO gym.

The Barakos turned the game around in the final three minutes behind a fluid offense and a tough defense that limited the Phone Pals to just two points in that stretch.

"I think we're still a contender," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao of his team, the reigning Fiesta Conference champion and runner-up to Purefoods in the Philippine Cup.

"But we still have to work on a lot of areas to be able to contend with Ginebra. I think Ginebra is the team to beat this season because of its depth and size and San Miguel could be a surprise treat if LA Tenorio blends well with the team quickly," Guiao added.

Among other things, Guiao said the Barakos have to improve on their rebounding. The Phone Pals beat the Barakos off the boards, 51-45.

Panel gives drafts to law firm

By Musong R. Castillo

THE THREE-MAN PANEL TASKED TO form the backbone of the new national sports association (NSA) for basketball passed yesterday to a law firm the task of consolidating two different drafts of the constitution and by-laws it pored through in a meeting the other day.

The panel, composed of Manny V. Pangilinan, Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) president Joey Lina and Pilipinas Basketball (PB) head Bernie Atienza tasked the Sycip-Salazar law firm to go through the constitutions of the two bodies that wrestled for basketball leadership to try and come up with a consolidated by laws for the soon-to-be-formed association.

"The lawyers hope to come up with the finer points of both constitutions and come up with one consistent draft that the panel will study again," said PBL commissioner Chino Trinidad.

An INQUIRER source privy to the details of the formation of the new association said the constitution of both the BAP and the PB clash in four major areas—general membership, board composition, term of office and the power of the national congress.

"The lawyers are tasked to try to draft a constitution with a common language and then, after they come up with that draft, the panel will start making amendments," said the source. "The panel cannot just sit down and start writing a constitution on a blank sheet of paper."

Scenes at Team USA dugout

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

LONG AFTER EVeryone had gone back home from Japan—BAP president Joey Lina and his entourage, the RP basketball stakeholders, POC representatives—Dr. Raul "George" Canlas and my son Raymond stayed behind to finish the World Basketball Championship in Saitama, Japan.

Doc Canlas was there as Asian representative to the Fiba medical mission where he was recently re-appointed to the same post. Raymond, on the other hand, attended a Fiba world coaching seminar.

Practically the only two Filipinos left in Saitama, the two had many stories to tell, which they experienced first-hand, such as the scene at the US team's dugout after its shameful loss to Greece.

"They're gonna kill us back home!" the Chicago Bulls' Kirk Heinrich was quoted saying, even as Lebron James and Carmelo Anthony sobbed openly.

Cleveland's James, Elton Brand of the LA Clippers and Heinrich are rated by Doc Canlas as the most down-to-earth players in the US squad. The heaviest drinkers, according to Raymond, are the Latinos—even though it was an Australian, Andrew Bogut, who was kicked out of a pub for being rowdy.

* * *

James Yap's EENT surgeon Dr. Randy Lopa of the Makati Medical Center is trying to avoid having to remove the cager's bothersome nasal polyps—he's prescribed steroids and antibiotics.

Last season's PBA MVP has been under medication for two weeks now, according to his television game-show host-wife Kris Aquino, who has been taping nonstop since she and James returned from their US vacation some weeks back.

"Dr. Lopa wants to try the conservative treatment first, before resorting to surgery. He was amazed that James was able to play in the last conference (and win the MVP award), considering that his breathing was severely hampered by the polyps," Kris relates.

James first discovered he had the growth when he was in Grade 6. He had them excised six years ago but they grew back.

A second operation was being considered—after the polyps started to cause profuse bleeding during the latter part of the Philippine Cup—but in Kris' text message after James' checkup late yesterday afternoon, she reported that the doctor had decided not to operate.

"The operation is off, but James will need to see his doctor monthly and he will have to continue the use of a nasal spray two times a day for the rest of his life. Removing the polyps again is not advisable because they'll grow back within a year," Kris said.

* * *

Top candidates for the PBA Press Corps' Coach of the Year award are Red Bull's Yeng Guiao and Purefoods' Ryan Gregorio.

For the Danny Floro Trophy or the Executive of Year award, the nominees are governors Ely Capacio of San Miguel, Rene Pardo of Purefoods and George Chua of Red Bull.

We will know the winners of these two major awards during the PBAPC Awards Night, which will be held at Kamayan-Padre Faura this Saturday.

* * *

HOOPVINE: More sidelights from Saitama... When Rudy Fernandez of Spain was told that he had a famous Filipino actor namesake, he asked who was more handsome. Doc Canlas told him it was the Pinoy Rudy, without batting an eyelash... Several NBA scouts were at the Saitama Games. Right then and there, Argentina's 6-foot-7 Walter Herrmann was signed up by the Charlotte Bobcats scout... Raymond was so impressed with Lebron who, he says, is almost superhuman. "Basketball seems to be so easy for him. He's very strong, very fast and has great leaping ability," he said... The Philippines has gained a reputation within the Fiba. From what I heard, Fiba officials smirk whenever anyone attempts to talk about the basketball impasse here. "They find us so *gulo* and so *kulit* (troublesome). What turned them off was the POC request for IOC intervention in resolving the country's basketball problems," a woman who went to Saitama reported.

SANTOS Sambajon: Aiming for the big money.

3 more RP bets advance in IPT Tour

THEY ARE ALL FILIPINOS, BUT ONE NOW LIVES IN JAPAN, the other in Canada and the third in the United States.

Wherever Ramil Gallego, Edwin Montal and Santos Sambajon originated, however, doesn't really matter.

What's important is all three are Filipinos and are carrying the Philippine colors in the rich 2006 World Open 8-Ball International Pool Tour Championships at the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino in Reno, Nevada.

The Japan-based Gallego, the US-based Sambajon and the Canada-based Montal advanced to the second round Monday (Tuesday afternoon in Manila), making it a perfect 13-for-13 for Team Philippines in the $3-million event staking $500,000 (P25 million) to the champion.

Earlier, Efren "Bata" Reyes, Francisco "Django" Bustamante, Alex Pagulayan, Dennis Orcollo, Marlon Manalo, Ronato Alcano, Warren Kiamco, Rodolfo Luat, Jose "Amang" Parica and Antonio Lining advanced from various groups of the 200-man field. They are scheduled to play the second round in their respective brackets Tuesday night.

Gallego, who hails from Bacolod City, beat Ray Martin (8-3) of the United States and Toni Judet (8-5) of Romania but bowed to former World trick shot ruler Fabio Petroni (8-4) of Italy and Sal Butera (8-5) of the United States.

With his 2-2 card, Gallego wound up at second place in Group 37 with a higher game winning points of 51.02 percent than Butera's 50 percent.

A resident of North Terrace, California, Sambajon bested Brady Golan (8-7) of Canada and Leil Gay (8-4) of the United States but loss to Ben Davies (8-6) of Australia. Sambajon also nipped Hiroshi Takenaka (8-7) of Japan for a 3-1 win-loss slate and second place in Group 32.

Montal, on the other hand, finished at second spot in Group 39 with a 3-1 record. A total of 120 players advanced to the second round.

Marlon Bernardino

Interscholastic: La Salle golfers start hot

POWERHOUSE LA SALLE GRABBED THE LEAD IN all four divisions after the rain-delayed opening round yesterday of the Samsung Interscholastic Golf championships at the North and South courses of Canlubang Golf and Country Club in Laguna.

Justin Limjap tamed the North course with a one-under-par 71 for 55 points in sparking an early break away by La Salle-Taft in boys' college play.

Together with the 54 points of Chuckie Hong and the 48 of Marco Olives, La Salle totaled 157, a big 19 points in front of Ateneo, which had 138 on the 49 of Don Padilla, the 45 of Kevin Lachica and the 44 of Dax Garcia.

La Salle paced School of Tomorrow by one in the combined girls' college-high school; La Salle Green Hills was on top by six in boys' high school; and another La Salle Green Hills team was up by 8 in the grade school division of the 54 hole event co-sponsored by KZG, Custom Clubmakers, Sunbolt, C-Lium Fibre, Taylormade, Titleist, Microtel Inn & Suites.

Geleen Handog and Jyra Wong scored 52 and 46, respectively, for 108 points, as La Salle edged past School of Tomorrow which drew 51 from Sunshine Baraquiel and 46 from Regine de Guzman.

LSGH could only get 51 from Miko Yee, who is eyeing a third consecutive overall individual title, but still moved ahead in the high school battle. Counting the 49 of Allan Guy and 39 of Marvin Mendoza, LSGH had 139 for the day, as against the 133 of Ateneo (Gabe Villareal 47, Moshe Baldo 46, Rocco Sumabat 40).

LSGH's trio of veteran internationalist came to fore in a grade school division as Miggy Yee, AR Ramos and JB de Claro combined for 114 to lead Ateneo (106). Leading their respective division in the individual battles where Limjap (college), Yee (high school), Nico Evangelista (grade school) and Geleen Handog (girls college-high school).

Is Manny Pacquiao due for a knockout?

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

DO YOU REMEMBER THE LAST TIME Manny Pacquiao had to pick himself up from the floor after suffering a knockdown?

You, too, must have forgotten. It happened three years ago, on March 15, 2003 to be exact, in a fight at the Luneta.

It's not easy to remember, much more spell out, the name of the tall, famished Kazakh fighter who tagged Pacquiao with a straight to the chin that sent the pride of GenSan down on his knees.

That knockdown came in the third round. Pacquiao sprang back to stop the lean visitor in the fifth to essay another escape act.

Of course, that decking was anything but accidental.

Before that, there was that incident on Oct. 14, 2000, when Pacquiao fell cross-eyed, his face on the canvas, after taking a left to the face. The guy who floored Pacquiao was Australia's Nedal Hussein in Antipolo City. Pacquiao, however, got some hilarious help from the referee—who suddenly forgot to count fast and right—to survive, before being declared TKO winner in the 10th round.

* * *

It may not be worth recalling, those falls that would again bare a chink in the Pacquiao armor.

That last crash came a little over three years ago. But to Pacquiao fanatics, it must've happened in another lifetime.

In fact, there are many Pacman devotees who were amazed to learn that their idol had, indeed, suffered at least two knockout losses in his career—against Arnulfo Torrecampo in 1996 and Medgoen Singsurat of Thailand in September 1999.

This could only be blamed on the air of invincibility that has started to envelop the Pacquiao legend.

But has Pacquiao, based on his sensational wins, become unstoppable?

* * *

The truth is that, more than anybody else, Pacquiao knows he does not own a sure antidote to the dreaded disease called a knockout.

This could be the only reason why he kept making the Sign of the Cross before trading leather with foes.

For a fact, Pacquiao appeared only one good blow away from crashing in the third round of his last fight against Oscar Larios at the Araneta Coliseum in July.

Before that, Pacquiao himself would admit to selected friends that he was momentarily in queer streets in the second round against Mexican Erik Morales, whom he went on to stop in the 10th round in Las Vegas last January.

* * *

Anyway, we talk here of the possibilities of knockout because majority of fans—75 percent of the bulk—polled by Box.Latino.com predicted an early ending to the Nov. 18 rubber match between Pacquiao and Morales.

These voters gave Morales a 38.32 percent approval rating (to score a KO), with Pacquiao getting 36.26.

That's a very close, but don't tell it to boxing expert Hermie Rivera, who swears, tongue in cheek, that the only way Morales could beat Pacquiao is for Bob Arum to include former Comelec commissioner Virgilio Garcillano among the judges.

You can bet Pacquiao would again be an outstanding favorite against Morales in their third encounter, called the Grand Finale.

But the reason Morales had gained an edge in the polls (to score a KO) was obviously the unexpected allowance Pacquiao has given for his Mexican rival to weigh past the original 130-lb. limit.

While Morales had had to agonize and wrestle with his unwilling body to make the limit in his last outing against Pacquiao, the legendary Mex will this time have the desired elbow room in their third encounter.

Unlike last time, Morales could eat enough and train twice as hard—plus factors denied him last time. Let's all pray the extra one or two pounds don't provide the world of difference come KO time.

SPORTSWATCH

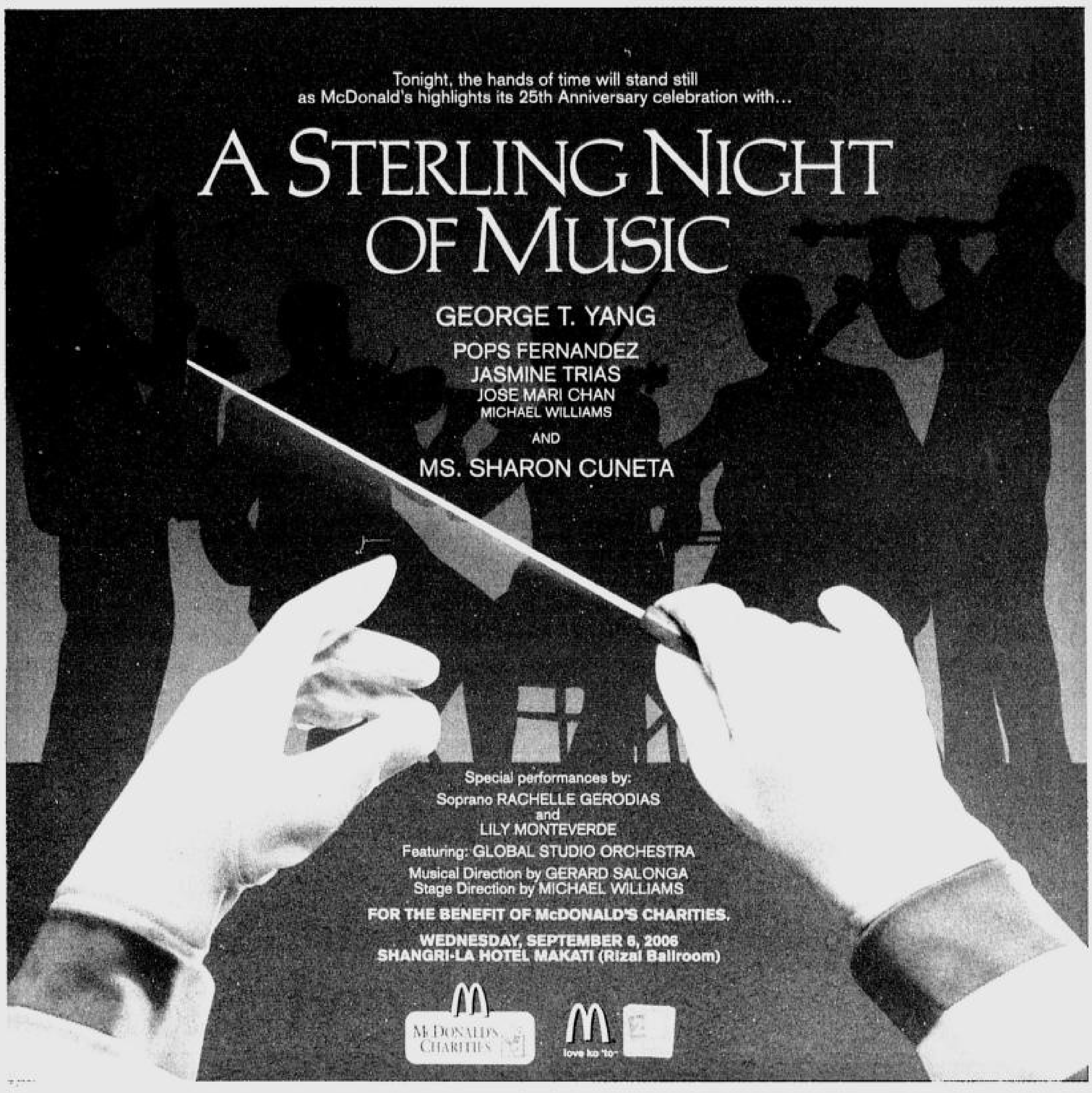
75 fights today as GCAP derby starts

ALL EYES WILL BE ON THE NEW BATTLECROSSES AS PROMINENT COCKERS and breeders see action in the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines 5-stag derby starting at 5 p.m. today at the San Juan Coliseum. The first leg of the GCAP 2006 stag series, sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000, features 75 fights. Among the early favorites are the entries of Gerry Ramos, Patrick Antonio, Rudy Albano, Jun Topacio, boxing hero Manny Pacquiao, Mayor Dennis Pineda, Louie Cua, Pol Estrellado and Benjie Lim. For inquires, call 725-5369 or 725-6563.

Stag Festival at Roligon stakes P1.5M

THE 2006 STAG FESTIVAL 5-STAG DERBY UNFOLDS AT ROLIGON MEGA COCKpit on Sept. 26, 28 and 30 with P1.5 million in prizes at stake. "This annual event is a perfect vehicle for new breeders to penetrate the national cockfighting scene," said host Rolly Ligon, who pegged the entry fee at P8,800. The fastest-win champion will receive P250,000. Meanwhile, the qualifiers, as well as those fielding six straight stags must submit entries today in connection with the "Ray Showdown" 6-stag derby The finals kick off tomorrow with more than 100 fights on tap

FASTEST: Kathy Maningding (inset) speeds to victory in the ladies' class of the 6th leg of the Motorsports Slalom Grand Prix in SM Bacoor, Cavite, recently. The 23-year-old Maningding, a private pilot and one of the favorites to bag the Top Slalom Lady Driver of the Year award, grabbed the series lead with the win. She is backed by Cocoy Alberto Racing, Subic Montessori, Explorer Motors Inc., College of St. Catherine and Sta. Quiteria Market.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ASIAD CHECKMATE

Swiss System tilt flawed, say GMs

THEY ARE ALL WILLING TO GO THROUGH ELIMINATIONS, BUT not under the Swiss System which they say is flawed and demeaning.

This was the line chosen by chess Grandmasters Eugene Torre, Mark Paragua and Joey Antonio in defending their decision not to take part in the ongoing qualifying tournament for the Philippine team to the Doha Asian Games in December.

"We were willing to earn our slots in the RP team through an elimination, but not under the Swiss System [which] is flawed, dangerous and demeaning to our stature as grandmasters," the country's highest ranked players said in a joint statement.

"We are willing to play under any format that is reliable, such as the round robin, which we adopted in forming the team that achieved our best-ever seventh-place finish in the 1988 Thessaloniki World Chess Olympiad in Greece."

The three GMs also said that "[majority] of the strong federations do not conduct elimination tournaments anymore for members of their national teams. They just seed their GMs and top-rated players."

The trio cited as examples China, India, Indonesia, Qatar, Vietnam, the former Soviet republics, and "practically all countries in the world."

3 wins in row for Laylo

INTERNATIONAL MASTER DARwin Laylo notched three straight wins to grab the solo lead after seven rounds of the 2006 National Chess Federation of the Philippines qualifying tournament at the Entertainment Hall of SM Mall of Asia.

The 26-year-old Laylo, back-to-back national champion, beat Nelson Villanueva and NM Arlan Cabe on Monday and NM John Paul Gomez yesterday to pace the 11-round Swiss tournament being held to select the three RP representatives (two men, one woman) to the Doha Asian Games in December.

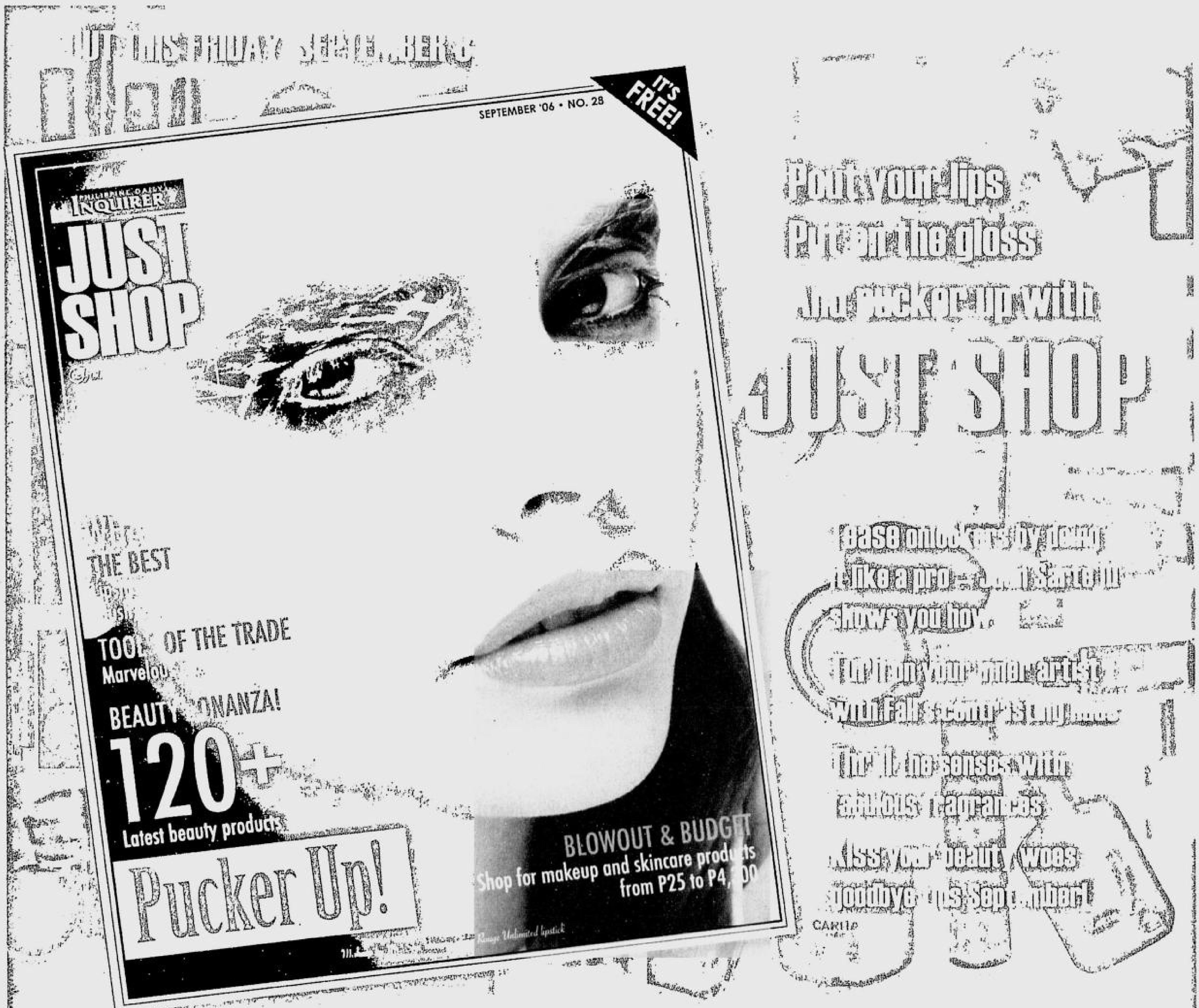
Laylo, who earned his IM title in the recent Dato Arthur Tan-Malaysian Open, now has 6.5 points on six wins and one draw.

His only draw came at the hands of IM Richard Bitoon in the fourth round on Sunday.

Four players—GM Nelson Mariano, IM Oliver Dimakiling, NM Rolando Nolte and Bitoon—shared second place with six points.

Mariano, the tourney's only GM, posted his fourth straight win at the expense of Nelson Villanueva.

Dimakiling outclassed Ruel Nuttal in the seventh round.



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Inflation eased further to 6.3% in August

Strong peso, stable crude cost temper price increases

By Michelle V. Remo

INFLATION CONTINUED TO DECELERATE FOR THE FIFTH straight month in August, posting an annual rate of 6.3 percent largely due to the slowdown in the price increases of oil and utilities, the National Statistics Office reported yesterday.

The inflation rate for August was within the forecast of between 5.8 and 6.5 percent made by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP). Inflation in July stood at 6.4 percent.

The August inflation brought the average for the first eight months to 6.9 percent, prompting economic authorities to project that full-year inflation would settle below the official forecast of 7.3-7.9 percent.

Documents from the NSO showed that year-on-year inflation rate for fuel,

INFLATION/B4

IN THIS ISSUE

Parents join International School revolt /B5
Gov't needs to borrow P390.7B in 2007 /B10

BIR targets erring accountants

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE HAS enhanced its anti-tax evasion program by targeting to prosecute not only tax evaders but also accountants and auditors who work in cahoots with the tax cheats.

Deputy Revenue Commissioner Gregorio Cabantac told the INQUIRER that the modification of the RATE (Run After Tax Evaders) program, now called Expanded RATE, was in line with the revenue agency's efforts to discourage accountants and auditors from helping out corporate clients to avoid payment of accurate taxes.

Cabantac, who takes charge of the BIR's legal group, said the Expanded RATE complements the recently issued Revenue Regulation No. 11-2006, which provides the guidelines for the accreditation of accountants and auditors who can represent clients before the BIR, as well as removing the accreditation or suspension of erring ones.

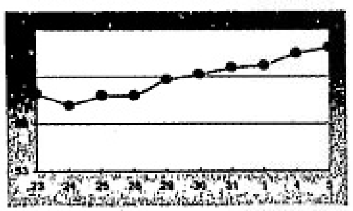
Cabantac said the RATE program would be more effective and holistic if the BIR would also go after accountants and auditors who would commit violations stated under RR No. 11-2006.

The revenue regulation states that an accred-

BIR TARGETS/B3

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



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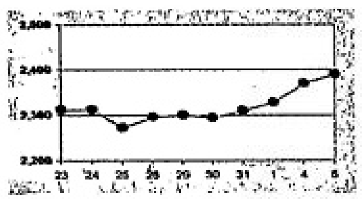
As of 5 p.m., Sept. 5, 2006

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Shares hit 3-month high

SHARE PRICES ROSE 0.91 PERCENT to a three-month high yesterday, extending gains to a fourth day on the back of the peso's sustained gains, easing inflation and an improving fiscal outlook, dealers said.

This boosted investor confidence and sparked continued buying in blue chips led by PLDT, they added.

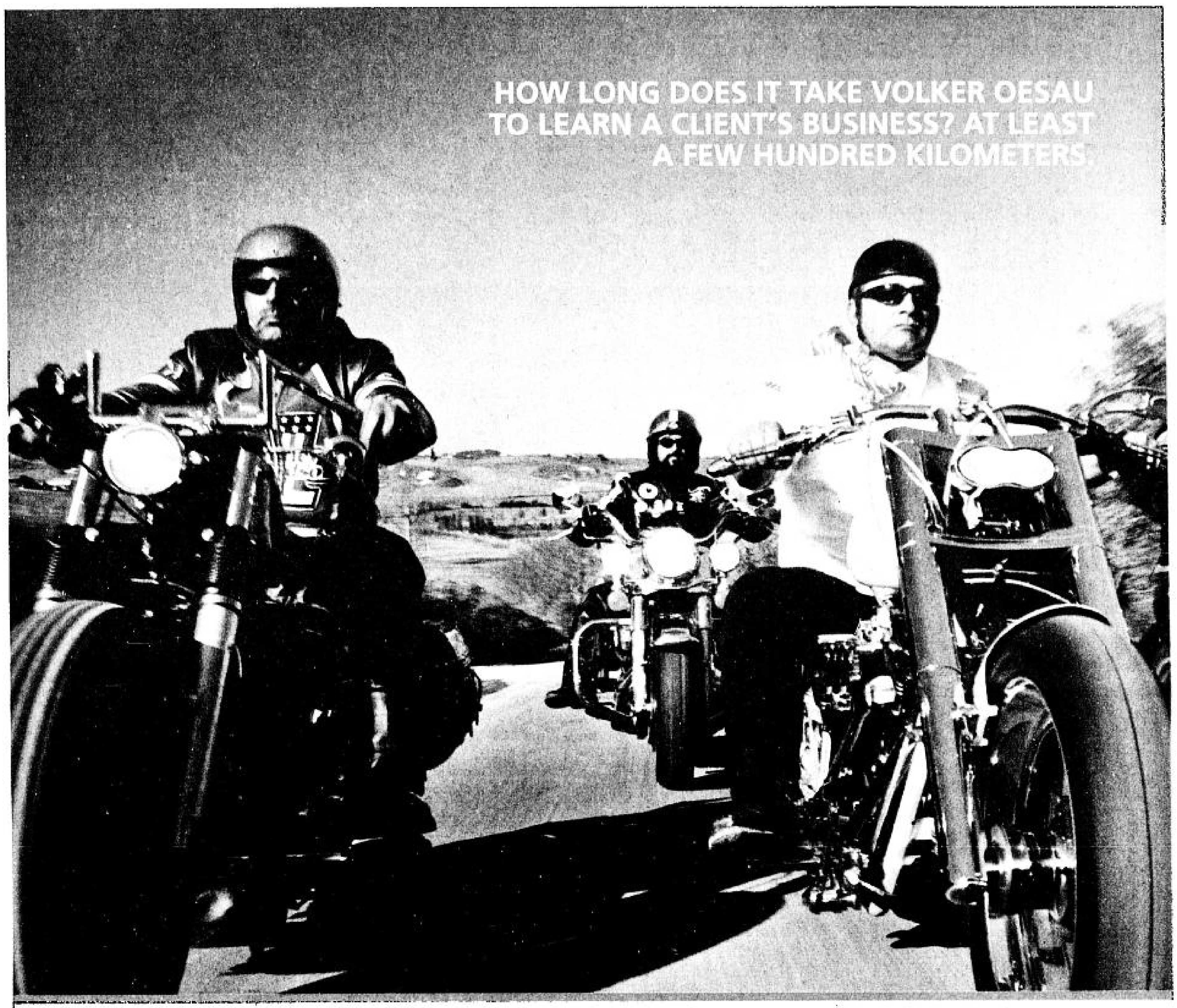
The composite index added 21.46 points to 2,392.56, the day's high, off a low of 2,371.10. It was the index's best finish since May 17 when it closed at 2,463.57.

The broader all-shares index rose 6.30 points to 1,481.53.

However, losers outnumbered gainers 75 to 37, with 52 stocks ending unchanged.

A total of 11.7 billion shares were traded

STOCKS/B3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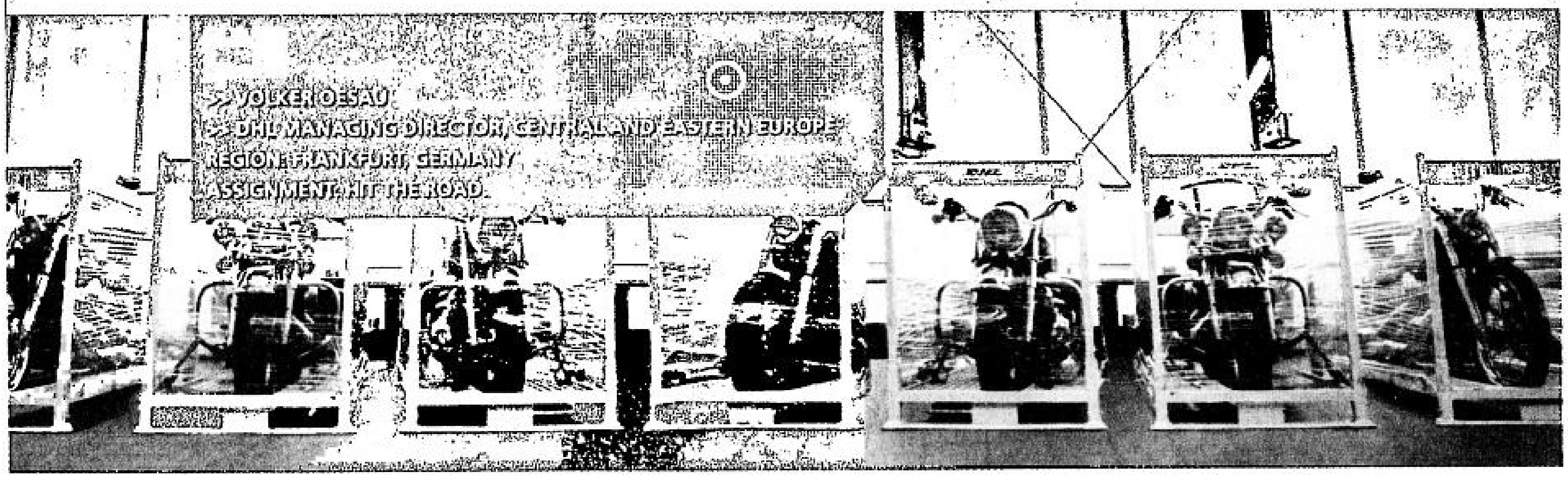
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Korean firm seen bidding for Masinloc, Calaca plants

By Abigail L. Ho

AIMING TO FURTHER EXPAND ITS OPERATIONS in the country, Korea Electric Power Corp. (Kepco) is keen on bidding for the Masinloc and Calaca coal-fired power plants, both rated at 600 megawatts (MW), when these are again placed on the auction block.

A source familiar with the matter said Kepco was ready to bid for the Masinloc plant when it was put up for sale two years ago, but the bid did not push through because its supposed partnership with First Gen Corp. did not materialize.

"First Gen had all the documents. Although Kepco had also conducted its own due diligence on the plant, there was no time to put together all the documents required to participate in the auction," the source said. "But we can bid now, even without a partner."

PSALM is expected to rebid the Masinloc plant, following the termination of its asset purchase agreement with winning bidder YNN Pacific Consortium Inc. in early August.

Kepco was also interested in bidding for the Calaca plant, the source said, which Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) would likely bid out next year.

When PSALM places the Calaca plant on the auction block again, that would be the privatization body's third attempt to sell the plant as the first two auctions were both declared failed.

The first bidding was considered failed when only one bidder submitted the final bid documents for the plant, while the second bidding was declared failed when both bidders, First Generation Luzon Power Corp. and DMCI Holdings Inc., were unable to meet the $288-million reserve price for the facility.

PSALM president Nieves Osorio had said the privatization agency would definitely rebid both generation assets, but most likely when at least half of the plants' capacity were already covered by power supply contracts.

Apart from the Masinloc and Calaca plants, the source said Kepco would also be bidding for the 112-MW Pantabangan-Masiway hydropower plant package that PSALM would be selling on Friday, as well as the 360-MW Magat hydropower plant.

Kepco Philippines Corp. president Lee Gil Gu had earlier said that the independent power producer was also eyeing the Philippine assets of Atlanta-based Mirant Corp.

Mirant currently owns and operates the 1,200-MW Sual and the 735-MW Pagbilao coal-fired power plants in Pangasinan and Quezon, respectively. It also holds a 20-percent stake in the Ilijan power facility.

Its net ownership interest in those three generating facilities come up to 2,203 MW.

TELL THE TRUTH,
GENERAL ABAYA

The Filipino People deserve to know: who or what is the PRESSURE behind the armed and forcible take-over of the Poro Point Seaport last August 5, 2006?

YOUR GENERAL COUNSEL SAID THERE IS PRESSURE AND DENOUNCED IT

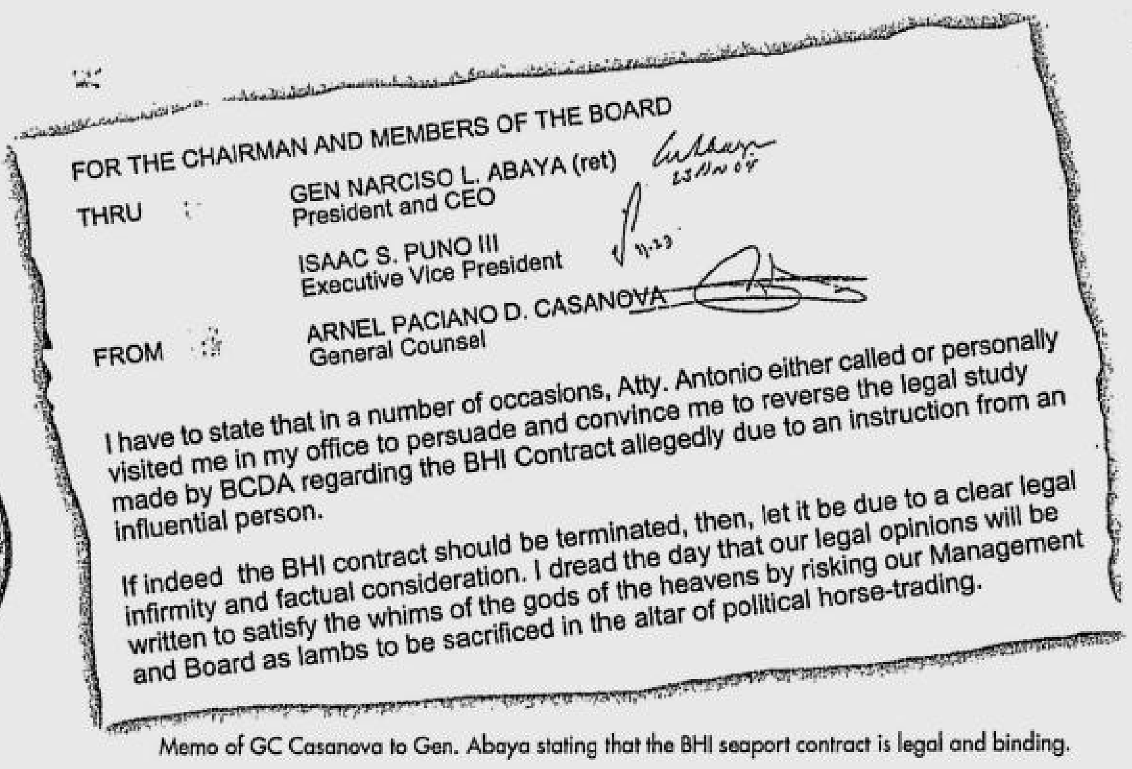
"...the Senate should also investigate revelations made by Arnel Casanova, BCDA legal counsel, about political pressure on him to reverse his study affirming that the lease contract was valid and the takeover of the port has no basis"

"In a memorandum to Abaya and BCDA chair Filadelfo Singson-Rojas, a cousin of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, Casanova said a BCDA director called and visited him several times to pressure him to reverse the results of his study

Casanova, in his memorandum, said the official told him that the instruction came from a very 'influential person".

[Philippine Daily Inquirer, page A17, August 16, 2006]

Arnel Casanova



FOR THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD
THRU : GEN NARCISO L. ABAYA (ret)
President and CEO
ISAAC S. PUNO III
Executive Vice President
FROM : ARNEL PACIANO D. CASANOVA
General Counsel

I have to state that in a number of occasions, Atty. Antonio either called or personally visited me in my office to persuade and convince me to reverse the legal study made by BCDA regarding the BHI Contract allegedly due to an instruction from an influential person.

If indeed the BHI contract should be terminated, then, let it be due to a clear legal infirmity and factual consideration. I dread the day that our legal opinions will be written to satisfy the whims of the gods of the heavens by risking our Management and Board as lambs to be sacrificed in the altar of political horse-trading.

Memo of GC Casanova to Gen. Abaya stating that the BHI seaport contract is legal and binding.

YOUR ATTEMPTED FORCIBLE TAKE-OVER OF PORO POINT BETRAYED PRESSURE

Sequence of events:

1. Former Poro Point Management Corporation president Juanito Antonio reports that BCDA cannot deliver the committed parcels of land to Bulk Handlers, Inc. (BHI) under the Pre-Incorporation Agreement (March 28, 2005)
2. BHI writes to BCDA regarding its failed commitment (January 6, 2006)
3. PPMC passes resolution declaring contract void (June 1, 2006)
4. **PPMC asks DENR to issue CDO (July 25, 2006, 12:20 pm)**
5. **DENR issues CDO without hearing and due process (July 25, 2006 4:00 pm)**
6. DENR CDO is served on PPIC (August 4, 2006)
7. Abaya asks PPA to take over (August 4, 2006)
8. Attempted armed forcible take over (August 5, 2006)

YOU DENIED THAT PRESSURE EXISTS

"'I have the interest of the BCDA and not anybody's [interest]. Nobody can pressure me' Abaya said"

[Philippine Daily Inquirer, page A16, August 17, 2006)

Bases Conversion Development Authority president Narciso Abaya yesterday categorically denied accusation of political pressure in their attempt to takeover the Poro Point seaport

"'In my entire professional career, including my stint as AFP chief of staff, I have never been influenced nor dictated upon by any person or group on how to discharge my lawful duties' Abaya said."

[Manila Bulletin, page B2, August 13, 2006]

Was your Counsel lying about the "pressure", General?
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PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Megaworld, partner readying mortgage financing scheme

CONDOMINIUM AND OFFICE BUILDING developer Megaworld Corp. and Rosenberg Real Estate Equity Funds (RREEF), the world's leading property investment manager, have agreed to explore the possibility of creating a unique borrowing scheme for home buyers.

RREEF, a US-based subsidiary of the Deutsche Bank Group, currently manages more than $20 billion in real estate equity investments.

Under a memorandum of understanding signed earlier, both parties agreed to explore the creation of the country's first "structured end-to-end" mortgage financing program for Megaworld's real estate projects.

While the terms of the mortgage financing program have yet to be finalized, Megaworld officials said the company was planning to provide more flexible financing terms for buyers, such as lower interest rates and longer payment period.

"We believe that at our level, we are poised to reap the rewards of growth in the residential sector. The growth will be fueled by the rising demand from overseas Filipino workers and the availability of mortgage financing," the company said.

Under the MOU, Megaworld will act as the originator of the home loans—or an agent that solicits accounts or borrowers. RREEF could be tapped to service the loans.

Financial institutions that will provide the loans have yet to be identified by both parties.

Officials said a number of Megaworld projects could be offered with home mortgage financing, including its recently launched P8.5-billion Manhattan Garden City, a condominium project in Araneta,.Cubao.

Currently, some home loans could be paid over a period of five to 10 years, carrying an interest rate of 11 to 11.5 percent a year.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

DHL sees 11% market growth

DHL EXPRESS (PHILIPPINES) CORP., THE local arm of one of the world's biggest logistics companies, sees a 9-11 percent growth in the market but has stood by its 30-percent growth target for the year.

"The slow economic growth in the country, averaging at only about 5 percent or so, is really dampening business in general, making the logistics market grow by only about 9 to 11 percent," company country manager Lawrence P. Llamzon said in an interview.

"However, we have to grow ahead of the market in order to stay viable and competitive," he said.

"It (30 percent) has been the target of DHL Express (Philippines) all this year and this will not change," he added. "DHL has about 40-percent market share in the Philippines and in Asia, which makes us no. 1 in the domestic and regional logistics markets. We intend to keep it that way."

Asked how DHL plans to reach its lofty target, Llamzon said the company had put up accessible retail outlets or service points in strategic areas in the country and had sought partners that could help boost its services.

DHL has so far put up eight DHL Servicepoint outlets in Metro Manila and will soon open 1 in Cebu City. These outlets serve as one-stop-shop centers for the customers' express and cargo delivery needs.

"The common misconception is that DHL only delivers small mail packets or at most, boxed parcels weighing about 10 kg," Llamzon said. "Actually, we also deliver cargos of up to 5 tons."

DHL has also signed a five-year contract with Malaysian air cargo operator Transmile Group Bhd, which will distribute parcels and mails for DHL across Asia.

The Philippines is one of the Malaysian company's service areas. Its fleet of 10 B727s, four MD-11s, four B737s and two Cessna 208Bs also operate in Singapore, Indonesia, Taiwan, Sri Lanka, South Korea, Myanmar and Cambodia.

Riza T. Olchondra

BIR . . .

From page B1

itation by an accountant or an auditor to represent a client before the BIR shall be revoked if they commit offenses like assisting in the evasion of taxes, failure to remit tax payments made by their clients, certifying financial statements that contain false information such as on income, and signing financial statements without conducting audit, among others.

Accreditation of accountants and auditors who may represent clients before the BIR is done either by the Revenue National Accreditation Board (RNAB) for taxpayers remitting to the BIR's head office, or the Revenue Regional Accreditation Board (RRAB) for those remitting to regional offices.

Cabantac said the BIR has already discussed the Expanded RATE program before members of organization of accountants and tax practitioners, including the the Tax Management Association of the Philippines (TMAP), and the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Picpa). *Michelle V. Remo*

Shares . . .

From page B1

valued at P2.47 billion.

"Some investors cashed in on gains in second- and third-liners, but the general sentiment remains bullish because of the peso's renewed vigor and growing expectations that the government will achieve its goal of a balanced budget by 2008," said Ron Rodrigo of Unicapital Securities.

Rodrigo said September has historically been a good month for stock trading as investors resume buying shares after lying low in August, usually considered a "ghost month" especially by the Chinese. *AFP*

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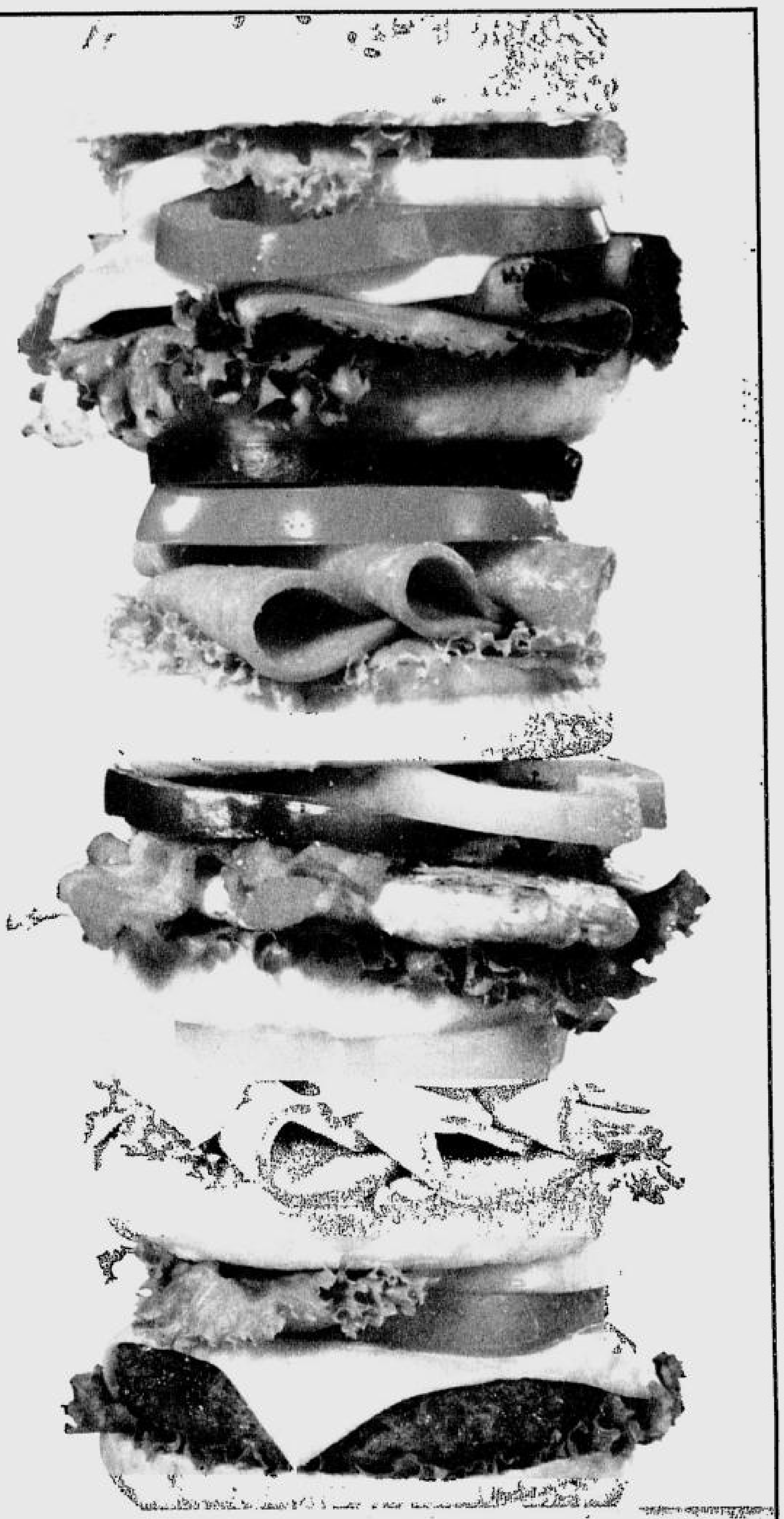

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Peso continues to strengthen

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY TOUCHED A NEW four-year high of 50.33 before closing at 50.37 against the US dollar, still supported by strong investment flows and upbeat currency trading across Asia.

"The outlook remains positive," Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said during an economic briefing yesterday.

The local currency gained another 11 centavos from Monday's closing rate of 50.48 to post its strongest close since July 2002.

The BSP chief noted that strong foreign exchange inflows would allow the country to exceed its balance of payments target of $1.6 billion, and likewise build up its gross international reserves to a new record of $22 billion by the year's end.

HSBC Philippines treasurer Wick Veloso said the peso had encountered a key resistance at 50.33, indicating consolidation at a range of 50.25-50.45 against the greenback.

"It's based on historical charts. In 2002, the currency also traded at this range for two months in June and July," Veloso said.

Currency closes at 50.37 against $

Since the start of the year, Asia's best performing currency in 2005 has appreciated by 5 percent.

Tetangco said the peso's appreciation since the start of the year was supported by three factors: strong inflows from overseas Filipino workers, export receipts and increased investments, particularly foreign direct investments.

"This is in line with what's happening to the rest of the region. The other side to the strong peso is a weak US dollar," Tetangco said.

He noted that other currencies had also gained sharply against the greenback since the start of the year, with the Thai baht rising 9.6 percent, Indonesian rupiah by 8.3 percent and South Korean won by 5.8 percent.

"This is favorable for both business and investment as well as for moderating inflation. In fact, a significant part of the moderation in inflation despite the increase in oil prices has been the appreciation of the peso during the first eight months of the year," Tetangco said.

In terms of volatility, Tetangco said the peso had likewise moved in step with other currencies in the region.

He estimated the peso's volatility at 0.57 percent compared to the Thai baht's 0.63 percent.

"The BSP does not target any specific exchange rate. We essentially leave the peso to market forces and move only to smoothen sharp fluctuations," Tetangco said.

Tetangco said the country's positive balance of payments performance was also supporting the peso.

"The prospect for the external sector is that the BOP remains very positive on improving fundamentals and enhanced confidence," Tetangco said, "If you look at the performance for the first six months of the year, the BOP continued to post a surplus of more than $2 billion."

Most Asian currencies also appreciated yesterday, led by the Japanese yen, which was perked up by strong Japanese capital spending data.

The currencies were supported by foreign portfolio inflows into regional stock markets and the appreciation of the Chinese yuan, which had hit its highest level since being revalued from a virtual dollar peg in July.

Demand up for prime office space

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PROPERTY CONSULTANT CB RICHARD ELLIS Philippines said the real estate sector would continue to be buoyed by hefty demand for office space, particularly from business process and outsourcing firms.

CBRE said in an August 28 study that this demand for space for call centers and back office operations, such as accounting, medical and legal transcriptions and claims processing, would then lead to more retail developments in the provinces.

CBRE defines "grade A" office property as buildings located in a central business district area with high-quality amenities: floor plates greater than 1,000 square meters, central airconditioning , full back-up power, building automation systems and ample parking facilities.

Demand for office space has swelled in the past years as the BPO industry grew from roughly 1,500 seats and 2,400 employees in 2000 to over 70,000 seats and 112,000 employees at the end of 2005, CBRE said, citing data from industry group BPO Association of the Philippines.

The BPO Association expects that the country's BPO requirement will grow to over 200,000 seats by 2010, which translates to a real estate demand of over 1.4 million square meters.

Current gross floor area for "grade A" office spaces stood at 1.36 million square meters, 65 percent of which is in the Makati CBD, while 22.3 percent is in the Ortigas business district.

Tenants also now prefer to locate in technology-focused buildings registered under the Philippine Economic Zone Authority to take advantage of incentives under the law.

CBRE also said there was a shift toward a "landlord's market" due to the lack of suitable office space and land that can be developed for office use in the Makati CBD.

A landlord's market means the building owners have the upper hand in negotiating rates with tenants or lessees.

Average vacancy rates in Makati and Ortigas are down to single-digit levels of 3.3 percent and 5.4 percent, respectively, as of June 2006.

With the limited amount of space and suitable land upon which to build new office spaces, CBRE estimates that vacancy rates should remain low in the office district for the rest of 2006.

CBRE said that overall, demand for office space would exceed new supply, creating a temporary gap in the short to medium term.

A FEMALE broker is reflected on a glass panel as she heads toward an electronic stock price board at the Philippine Stock Exchange. Share prices rose 0.91 percent to a three-month high yesterday, extending gains to a fourth day on the back of the peso's sustained gains. AFP

Take caution, PSE tells public

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE YESTERDAY advised the public to exercise caution when investing in stocks.

"The PSE strongly advises the public to exercise prudence in making investment decisions," Lourdes de Guzman, PSE market regulation division vice-president, said in a memorandum issued to the public.

The warning came after a number of listed firms' shares breached their trading limits for no apparent reason, triggering fears of price manipulation.

The PSE freezes the trading of company shares when prices move up by 50 percent or drop by 40 percent from the last closing price in a single trade session.

The PSE said that all except one of these companies said they were not aware of any "material information" explaining the increase in the value and volume of their shares.

Companies that hit their trading limits last Friday include Magnum Holdings Inc. (up 50 percent at P1.98), Seafront Resources Corp. (up 50 percent to P1.68), Mabuhay Holdings Corp., (up 50 percent to 36 centavos), Baguio Gold Holdings Corp. (up 50 percent to P4.05) and Zeus Holdings (up 50 percent to 22.5 centavos).

Yesterday, PNOC Exploration Corporation class B shares rose 50 percent to P7.50 from P5 apiece.

It said "it cannot think of any development to which it can attribute the sudden surge" in its share price.

PNOC-EC is the upstream oil and gas unit 99.9-percent owned by state-run Philippine National Oil Company.

Baguio Gold, on the other hand, said investor appetite may have been propelled by its plans to acquire six holding firms that have a combined 82-percent interest in flag carrier Philippine Airlines. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Inflation eased further . . .

From page B1

light and water eased to 13 percent in August from 14.5 percent in July; services, 9 percent from 9.4 percent; and miscellaneous items, 3 percent from 3.1 percent.

Inflation for food, beverage and tobacco was higher at 5.6 percent from 5.2 percent, while those for clothing, and housing and repairs remained at their previous month's rates of 3.1 percent and 3.8 percent.

Jonathan Ravelas, Banco de Oro market strategist, told the INQUIRER that the strengthening of the peso was partly credited for the easing of inflation and relatively more benign adjustments in oil prices.

"Oil has not risen much from the $70-a-barrel level, so it did not have much impact as expected," Ravelas said. With the latest deceleration of the increase in consumer prices, Ravelas said, BDO projects inflation to hit a full-year average of only 6.7 percent.

The peso closed at 50.80 against the dollar last August, much stronger than the 56.30 recorded in the same month of the previous year.

An appreciation of the local currency helps temper inflationary pressures because it makes imported goods cheaper in peso terms. The downside, however, is that it makes the cost of the country's exports more expensive in dollar terms, making these less competitive.

Ravelas said the easing of inflation further strengthened expectations that the BSP would not be poised to tighten its monetary policy and would simply keep its policy rates at their current levels of 7.5 percent for overnight borrowing and 9.75 percent for overnight lending.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the continued slowdown in the increase in consumer prices has given more comfort to the central bank that inflation next year will not shoot up to levels higher than the targeted range of 4 to 5 percent.

The decelerating inflation allows monetary authorities to still keep interest rates unchanged, although Tetangco said the BSP would monitor factors that could accelerate inflation.

"There remain upside risks, particularly geopolitical concerns that could spark another round of oil price increases," he said.

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of September 5, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.7	106,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	37	37	36.5	36.5	1,193,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	54	54.5	54	54.5	2,286,700
China Banking Corp.	690	690	690	690	100
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	400
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.5	0.51	0.43	0.43	38,300,000
Equitable PCI Bank, Inc.	79	79	78.5	79	120,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	39	40	39	39.5	1,703,400
Philippine National Bank	34	34.5	34	34.5	10,500
Phil. Savings Bank	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	5,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	18.5	18.5	18	18	65,000
Security Bank Corp.	51.5	52	51.5	51.5	152,900
Union Bank of the Phil.	45	45	44.5	44.5	16,900
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	50,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	2.44	2.7	2.44	2.65	4,975,000
Filipino Fund Inc	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	10,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	5,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1630	1630	1630	1630	40
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	224	224	224	224	1,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2050	2055	2050	2055	490
Ivantage Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.38	1.38	5,317,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	48.5	49.5	48.5	49	807,700
First Phil Hldgs Corp	46.5	46.5	46	46.5	1,661,800
Manila Electric Co. A	18.5	18.75	18.25	18.25	594,700
Manila Electric Co. B	29.5	29.5	29	29	1,092,700
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9.1	9.1	8.9	9	959,000
Petron Corp.	4.1	4.1	3.95	4	5,278,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.29	0.29	0.27	0.27	1,000,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1	1.02	0.98	0.99	4,550,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3	3	3	4,000
Cadp Group Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	4,000
Cen Azucar de Tarlac	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	13,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23	23	23	23	30,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	33	33.5	33	33.5	174,400
Rfm Corp.	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	10,000
Roxas Holdings, Inc.	3.8	3.85	3.8	3.85	2,507,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	40,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65	65	64.5	65	338,000
San Miguel Corp. B	71	71	71	71	118,300
Universal Robina Corp.	17.75	17.75	17.5	17.75	1,620,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.205	0.235	0.205	0.235	1,420,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.33	0.34	0.3	0.32	6,030,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.68	1.68	1.64	1.66	482,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.8	4.9	4.75	4.9	485,000
CHEMICALS					
Corro-Coat Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	2,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.67	0.68	0.59	0.61	115,530,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.12	0.12	14,190,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Asia Amalgamated Holdings	0.73	0.73	0.71	0.73	970,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.009	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	440,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0095	0.01	0.009	0.0095	28,000,000
Ayala Corp.	457.5	462.5	457.5	462.5	175,700
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	300,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.1	5.1	5	5.1	1,884,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.031	0.031	0.029	0.029	35,600,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.86	1.86	1.84	1.84	257,000
Apc Group Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.27	0.27	13,800,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.009	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	301,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	1.08	1.1	1	1	1,453,000
Atn Holdings Inc.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	13,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	4.7	4.8	3.6	3.6	1,634,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.5	1.5	1.16	1.16	1,362,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.24	1.26	1.18	1.26	22,304,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.45	3.55	3,299,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.75	2.8	2,032,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.24	1.24	1,199,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	6	6	5.8	5.8	517,000
Medco Holdings	0.28	0.3	0.27	0.27	1,120,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.26	0.3	290,000
Magnum Holdings Inc	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	10,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	3.2	3.4	2.3	2.5	42,881,000
Pacifica	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	3,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	310,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc	0.8	0.85	0.8	0.85	230,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	310,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	16,180,000
SM Investments Corp.	222	228	222	227	2,404,850
South China Resources Inc	1.1	1.12	1	1	936,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.38	1.38	2,148,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.13	0.13	0.125	0.125	6,880,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.13	0.13	1,100,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	14.25	14.25	14	14.25	8,366,200
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	7,155,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	2,410,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.34	2.34	2.32	2.32	2,495,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	25,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	660,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.49	0.5	0.48	0.49	13,370,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	200,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.075	0.0775	0.0675	0.0675	15,300,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.42	1.44	1.42	1.42	16,889,000
Gotesco Land, Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	100,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	20,000
Interport Res.	0.008	0.008	0.0075	0.0075	67,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.008	0.008	0.0075	0.0075	28,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	1,000,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.02	0.02	0.017	0.017	3,100,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.022	0.022	0.02	0.02	5,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.76	1.76	36,548,000
Mrc Allied Ind. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.26	0.26	400,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	30,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	13	13	13	13	1,256,200
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.42	0.44	0.42	0.44	5,040,000
SM Development Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	3,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.1	8.2	8	8.1	2,253,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.64	0.65	980,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.095	0.095	4,400,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	16	16.25	16	16	41,800
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.24	1.26	1.24	1.26	3,475,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1015	1030	1015	1030	13,280
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	4.3	4.35	4.2	4.2	10,214,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1975	2005	1975	2000	188,940
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.215	0.215	0.205	0.205	3,510,000
Imperial Res.	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.019	41,900,000
Ionics Inc.	2.04	2.04	2	2	554,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0525	0.0525	0.05	0.05	3,200,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.0575	0.0575	0.0525	0.0525	35,400,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	10,000
Philweb Corp.	0.029	0.029	0.027	0.028	426,400,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	3.15	3.15	3.1	3.15	656,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	2,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	14.75	15	14.75	15	20,800
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	10,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.8	6.2	4.8	4.8	32,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.92	2	1.9	1.94	27,826,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	570,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	730,000
EDUCATION					
Ipeople Inc	2.95	2.95	2.9	2.9	55,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.28	2.28	2.2	2.2	712,000
Paxys Inc.	10.5	10.75	10.5	10.75	685,300
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	5.4	5.4	5.3	5.3	1,096,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	5.3	5.5	5.3	5.4	672,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.017	0.018	0.014	0.014	6,629,600,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	9.4	9.4	8.9	9.1	3,133,000
Benguet Corp. A	11.5	11.5	10.5	10.5	22,800
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.3	2.55	2.3	2.34	611,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.24	0.24	0.235	0.24	5,420,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.28	700,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.018	30,500,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.021	19,300,000
Omico Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.01	2,901,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	3.95	4	3.9	3.95	1,445,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4.05	4.05	3.95	3.95	4,986,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	20	21	20	21	73,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.57	0.57	0.52	0.52	1,650,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.65	0.68	0.65	0.65	1,700,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	1,770,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	122,700,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	51,600,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.18	1.18	1.1	1.12	1,206,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.2	1.2	1.16	1.16	266,000
Pnoc Exploration Corp.-B	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	1,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	11	11	10.5	10.5	276,100

CURRENCIES

September 5, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.778695	1.000000	50.5270
Japan	Yen	0.006652	0.008542	0.4316
United Kingdom	Pound	1.484270	1.906100	96.3095
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.100121	0.128576	6.4966
Switzerland	Franc	0.633239	0.813206	41.0889
Canada	Dollar	0.705020	0.905387	45.7465
Singapore	Dollar	0.495605	0.636456	32.1582
Australia	Dollar	0.596930	0.766577	38.7328
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.065668	2.652731	134.0345
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.207630	0.266638	13.4724
Brunei	Dollar	0.494033	0.634437	32.0562
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000110	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.020782	0.026688	1.3485
UAE	Dirham	0.212029	0.272287	13.7578
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.284200	64.8868
Argentina	Peso	0.251801	0.323363	16.3386
Brazil	Real	0.364302	0.467836	23.6383
Denmark	Kroner	0.134089	0.172197	8.7006
India	Rupee	0.016789	0.021561	1.0894
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212439	0.272814	13.7845
Mexico	New Peso	0.071634	0.091992	4.6481
New Zealand	Dollar	0.510285	0.655308	33.1107
Norway	Kroner	0.122957	0.157901	7.9783
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012888	0.016551	0.8363
South Africa	Rand	0.107678	0.138280	6.9869
Korea	Won	0.000811	0.001041	0.0526
Sweden	Kroner	0.107095	0.137531	6.9490
Syria	Pound	0.015001	0.019264	0.9734
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023688	0.030420	1.5370

Parents join International School revolt

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

HIGH SOCIETY AND EXPATRIATE PARENTS are calling for a special stakeholders' meeting to overthrow the fractious board of the International School Manila.

The brothers Zobel and their wives, Susana and Tana Madrigal, Enrique Razon Jr., Aurelio Montinola III and Wilfred Uytengsu are some of the more prominent people who have been compelled to intervene amid the sacking of popular superintendent David Toze and the subsequent sympathy resignations of two ISM trustees.

Toze, a former deputy head of the Brent School in Baguio, is credited for overseeing the transfer out of Makati and construction of the new Fort campus while the school was undergoing faculty strife from Filipino hires.

The agitated ISM parents have retained the Siguion Reyna law firm, the same counsel of Forbes Park and the similarly troubled Manila Polo Club, to prepare for a special stakeholders' meeting as early as next week.

The target of the parents' revolt: ISM trustees Martin Lahm III, Tom Navasero and Leandro de Mesa. According to the grapevine, the parents' revolt has already collected around 800 proxies and warm bodies for the planned special meeting, out of the 1,192 parent-members' head count in last May's board elections.

Still, it is not clear how the so-called "ADB block" would vote, since one of target directors, Lahm, happens to be the husband of the chief legal counsel of the Asian Development Bank.

In any case, the assistant superintendent, the three principals and their assistants, all expatriates, seemed united with Toze and the parents against trustees De Mesa and Navasero, as manifested in their open letter to ISM president Gracita Gilda Bocanegra.

Little is known about De Mesa, except that he is reportedly president of the hard-up Fil-Estate Marketing. Navasero, on the other hand, is a *balikbayan* businessman whose Hillsborough (California) house is being foreclosed by GE Capital.

As a result of the turmoil, which saw Toze being led out of the campus by security guards the other day, the seven-hectare campus in the Fort has taken on a siege mentality, with news camera teams staking out at the main gate.

According to the grapevine, the IT technical director was ordered to restrict even faculty e-mail privileges, after blow-by-blow accounts of the campus conflict surfaced in the protest website, www.ismstakeholders.com.

The besieged board, in the meantime, was struggling to maintain a semblance of normalcy for the 86-year-old school by quickly naming the second-in-command, Stephen Dare, as superintendent.

Dare, just as quickly, declined the appointment.

Both the Filipino and foreign faculty and administrative officials have also waded in, pressing for a meeting with the board yesterday afternoon to explain the circumstances that led to Toze's abrupt firing.

The board declined.

Money-go-round

- THE MID-LEVEL Camry, which now features BMW-7 and Mercedes S-class luxuries such as push-button start, folding rear sunshade, reclining rear seats, adaptive front lights, skid stability and cruise controls, and automatic rain sensors, will be available for oglers and buyers starting Friday at all Toyota dealers.
- AND speaking of Toyota, the launching of the gas-miser Avanza MPV is still two months away, but already the R&E and EMP taxi companies want to corner 1,000 units between the two of them.

Configured as a seven-seater, the 1.3-liter Avanza cab model will just seat five, with the rear bench seat ordered removed by the taxi licensing board to give way to a commodious luggage compartment.

Heard through the grapevine

MACAU casino king Stanley Ho has renewed the consultancy arrangement of Raul Roco law partner, Lorna Kapunan, for HK$120,000 a year.

Ho acquired the services of Kapunan in 2000, when the late senator was still wrapping up the investigation of the BW scandal as head of the Senate banking and financial institutions committee.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

Toyota sees Camry boosting sales

TOYOTA MOTOR PHILIPPINES CORP. EXpects sales of its flagship model Camry to more than double as it relaunched the car Monday as a premium luxury sedan from a medium-sized passenger car.

TMPC president Hiroshi Ito said the company saw monthly sales reaching 150 units this month and 100 units a month after that.

The older Camry versions had been selling at about 40 units a month, Ito said.

"(The 2006 Camry), which targets business executives, is a better product—more sophisticated and has enough value to justify the higher price," Ito said.

According to Toyota press materials, the Camry was redesigned and now features "class-leading technology such as 3.5-liter dual VVT-i engine, cruise control, push start and smart entry system, plus an abundance of state-of-the-art luxurious features and styling both in the interior and exterior."

The 3.5-liter variant-in 6-speed automatic transmission is priced at P1.99 million while two 2.4-liter versions—both in 5-speed automatic transmission—are tagged at P1.65 million and P1.43 million.

Asked why Toyota made a Camry with a larger engine at a time of global concern about rising fuel prices, Ito said: "This is equipped with a fuel efficient engine, more efficient than larger American cars."

The vehicle was first introduced worldwide in 1980 as the rear-wheel-drive sedan Toyota Celica Camry.

In 1982, the Camry was positioned as a global vehicle as exports of the luxurious front-wheel-drive sedan started.

Toyota currently makes the Camry, which has sold 10 million units globally, in eight countries including Japan and is being sold in more than 100 countries and regions.

In the Philippines, the Camry debuted in 1996 but started revving for market leadership in 2002 when the next-generation version was launched.

"The highest sales recorded (for the Camry was) in 2004 with almost 1,300 units," a company official said.

Serafin Pantaleon, TMPC senior vice president, said the firm was aiming for a market share of 38-39 percent with a turnover of 39,500 units for the whole year.

"We are hoping for growth (of about 11 percent) from the 35,500 units we sold in 2005," Pantaleon said. "Last year, we cornered 36.4 percent of the market." *Ronnel W. Domingo*

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· (1) Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® Processor 5050* (3GHz, 667 FSB)
· 1 GB PC2-5300 Fully Buffered DIMMs (DDR2-667)
· 1 HP 80GB NHP SATA HDD
· HP Embedded SATA RAID Controller
Regular price: ₱131,423
Also available:
₱125,000* HP ProLiant DL140 G3
· (1) Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® Processor 5050* (3GHz, 667 FSB)
· 1 GB PC2-5300 Fully Buffered DIMMs (DDR2-667)
· (1) HP 72GB 15K SAS 3.5 Hot Plug Hard Drive
· HP 8 Internal Port SAS Host Bus Adapter with RAID
Regular price: ₱175,119

₱120,000* HP ProLiant ML150 G3
· (1)Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® Processor 5050* (3GHz, 667 FSB)
· 1 GB PC2-5300 Fully Buffered DIMMs (DDR2-667)
· (1) HP 72GB 15K SAS 3.5 Hot Plug Hard Drive
· HP 8 Internal Port SAS Host Bus Adapter with RAID
Regular price: ₱170,220
Also available:
₱99,999* HP ProLiant ML150 G3
· (1)Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® Processor 5050* (3GHz, 667 FSB)
· 512 MB PC2-5300 Fully Buffered DIMMs (DDR2-667)
· HP 80GB 1" 7.2K SATA Hard Drive
· HP Embedded SATA RAID Controller
Regular price: ₱123,715

₱255,000* HP ProLiant DL380 G5
· (1) Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® Processor 5130* (2GHz, 1333 FSB)
· 2 GB (2 x 1 GB) PC2-5300 Fully Buffered DIMMs (DDR2-667) with Advanced ECC, mirrored and online spare memory capabilities
· Embedded Dual NC373i Multifunction Gigabit NICs
· Smart Array P400 Controller with 256MB cache (RAID 0/1/5)
· (2) HP 72GB 10K SAS 2.5 Hot Plug Hard Drives
Regular price: ₱341,649
Also available:
₱230,000* HP ProLiant DL380 G5
· (1) Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® Processor 5120* (1.87GHz, 1066 FSB)
· 1 GB (2 x 512 MB) PC2-5300 Fully Buffered DIMMs (DDR2-667) with Advanced ECC, mirrored and online spare memory capabilities
· Embedded Dual NC373i Multifunction Gigabit NICs
· Smart Array E200 SAS RAID Controller with 64MB cache (RAID 0/1)
· (2) HP 72GB 10K SAS 2.5 Hot Plug Hard Drives
Regular price: ₱302,277

₱175,000* HP ProLiant DL360 G5
· (1) Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® Processor 5120* (1.86 GHz, 1066 FSB)
· 1 GB (2 x 512 MB) Standard; PC2-5300 Fully Buffered DIMMs (DDR2-667)
· Embedded Dual NC373i Multifunction Gigabit NICs
· Smart Array E200i SAS RAID Controller with 64MB cache (RAID 0/1)
· (2) HP 72GB 10K SAS 2.5 Hot Plug Hard Drives
Regular price: ₱184,343

₱215,000* HP ProLiant ML370 G5
· (1) Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® Processor 5120* (1.86GHz, 1066 FSB)
· 1 GB PC2-5300 Fully Buffered DIMMs (DDR2-667)
· Embedded Dual NC373i Multifunction Gigabit NICs
· Smart Array E200 SAS RAID Controller with 64MB cache (RAID 0/1)
· (2) HP 72GB 10K SAS 2.5 Hot Plug Hard Drives
Regular price: ₱267,561

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Investing in ALFM: Wisest Investor M

ALFM Family continues to post strong performance i

In the local mutual fund industry, performance is king.

As any keen observer will note, mutual fund companies continue to compete against each other in the market, often touting figures and statistics in their advertising as indicators of past performance.

With all of the messages on positive growth, high yields and high performance, a first-time investor may be easily convinced that all mutual funds, by their nature, perform very well.

Of course, this is not entirely true.

Although past performance and Year-To-Date returns are not indicators of a mutual fund's future performance, there are other indicators that can help investors differentiate between mutual fund companies and gauge the quality as well as the performance of a fund.

According to BPI Investment Management, Inc. (BIMI) President Fernando Jose Sison III, an investor can enjoy the benefits of good mutual fund performance even during trying times if he carefully diversifies his investment in a reputable and stable company. In looking for a mutual fund company, investors should be keen on the following: professional fund management, fund performance, portfolio diversification, and distribution coverage.

While the local mutual fund industry is composed of quite competent players, no other mutual fund company, in the Philippines, can provide high growth percentages, expert fund management, distribution reach, and a wide selection of funds other than the ALFM Family of Mutual Funds.

Performance: past and present

Beginning with the ALFM Peso Bond Fund in 2000, the ALFM Family of Funds has continued to enjoy the undisputed position of having the biggest market share (at 49% of the total market as of July 2006) and among the best performing funds in the industry.

The three bond funds under the ALFM Family of Funds - the Peso, the US Dollar and the Euro - have all posted outstanding growth over the past years. The ALFM Family of Funds has also continued to outperform its competitors in terms of fund size, currently holding about P29 billion out of the total P60-billion industry fund size.

Mr. Sison added that not only has the ALFM Family of Funds outperformed its competitors in terms of aggregate fund size, but it has also continued to outperform in terms of returns. From January to July of 2006, the ALFM Family of Funds posted a significant increase in return rates, a solid indication of a positive trend in the performance of the products.

Mr. Sison elaborated that the ALFM Family of Fund's prudent investment management strategy is key in providing investors with consistent and benchmark-beating returns.

Fund management expertise like no other

The local bond markets are now more sophisticated than they were a few years ago. To remain competitive, a mutual fund company should be able to provide its investors with the prudent analysis that bond fund management now requires.

Historically, ALFM has been well known for its expertise in managing its funds and steering it with due diligence and consideration through the market and other influencing factors.

Mr. Sison stated, "ALFM boasts of professional fund managers and experts who possess an expansive knowledge of the financial markets... An ALFM investor should take solace in the fact that his investment portfolio is in the hands of fund managers who are able to take advantage of opportunities in the market."

A company's sales network is also an important factor in choosing a mutual fund as they work closely with the fund managers. ALFM boasts of competent and knowledgeable mutual fund agents who are prepared to inform an investor of the benefits, the risks, and the features of investing in a mutual fund.

Diversify only in good investments

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Sound investment choices

The ALFM Family of Funds Advantage
Through its existence, the ALFM Family of Funds in 3 currencies - Peso, U.S. Dollar and Euro - remains to be a strong leader in the Philippine mutual fund industry. The reason for this is the various advantages offered to investors. This is proof that truly no one takes care of its clients' welfare better than the Investors' No. 1 choice.

The ALFM Family of Funds allows clients to diversify at low cost. Each fund is a bond fund which pools the money of numerous investors to provide them with the immediate benefit of instant diversification and asset allocation without the high costs needed to create individual portfolios.

By investing in the ALFM Funds, investors are able to benefit from the fund management expertise of its professional investment managers. Under this arrangement, the investors are saved from the costly fees of management advisers and are relieved from the difficult and time-consuming task of research and analysis.

The ALFM Funds follow a unique risk management strategy. To appropriately manage the Funds' risks, the ALFM Funds have risk management policies that provide hedging mechanisms intended to protect the shareholders against interest rate volatility. Reserves for market risk are maintained using the principles of value-at-risk (VaR). VaR is the maximum loss on a position if prices go in an adverse direction over a period of time.

Only the ALFM Funds have the "no sales load" feature. With the ALFM Family of Funds, the published returns are exactly what the investors will receive upon redemption, subject to the minimum holding period of 180 days.

Investors receive monthly reports on the funds' performance. The fund managers send out monthly reports to investors to update them on the funds' returns, portfolio composition as well as the fund managers' market review and outlook.

The ALFM Funds are very liquid investments. The funds can buy back or redeem your shares on any business day (up to 12 noon, Manila time) at the prevailing net asset value (NAV) per share of the particular fund. This liquidity allows you to get your money when needed. However, redemptions made during the minimum holding period of 180 days are subject to early redemption fees.

The ALFM Funds has one of the widest networks of mutual fund advisors. ALFM boasts of competent and knowledgeable mutual fund advisors who are prepared to inform an investor of the benefits, the risks, and the features of investing in a mutual fund.

Furthermore, of all the funds available in the market, **only ALFM Peso Bond Fund gives free life insurance coverage,** amounting to P200,000.00, to qualified individual investors.

For another great performance, a salute

No other multi-currency family of funds can individually and collectively dominate the local mutual funds industry like ALFM. The ALFM Peso Bond Fund, ALFM Dollar Bond Fund and ALFM Euro Bond Fund continue to lead with their impressive performance in the market today. It's a strong performance that

	YTD	Past 1 Year	Past 2 Years	Past 3 Years
ALFM Peso Bond Fund	6.37%	9.52%	17.92%	26.97%

	YTD	P 1 Y
ALFM Dollar Bond Fund	3.48%	5.

* *All returns are absolute (net) as of August 30, 2006.*

TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE ALFM FAMILY OF FUNDS, CALL YOUR ALFM MUTUAL FUND ADVISOR TODAY!

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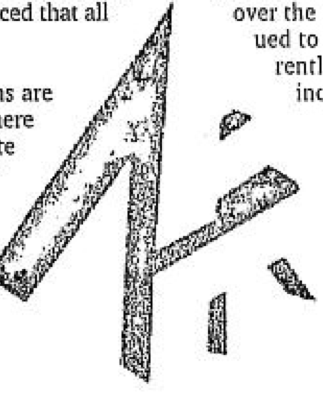

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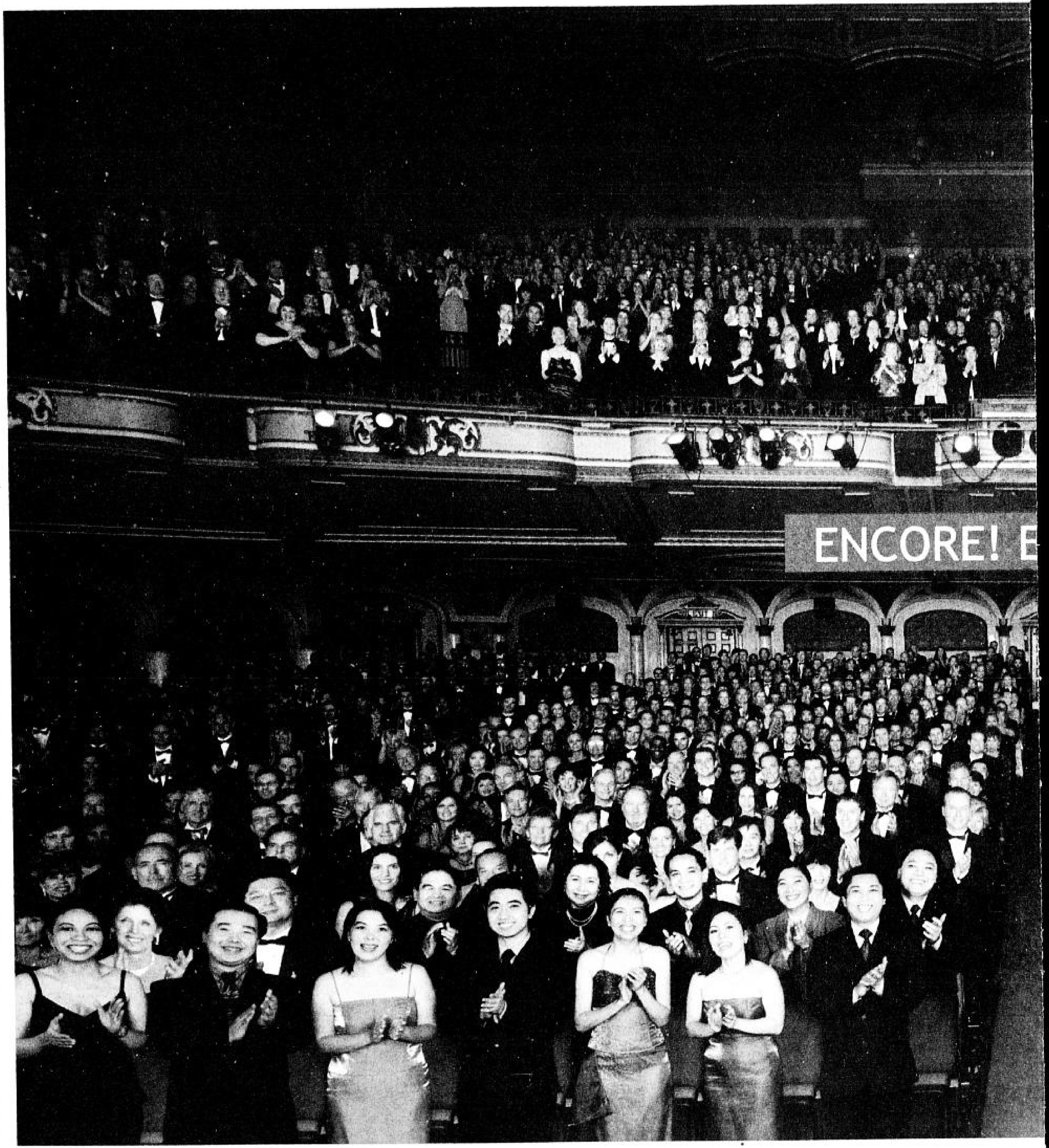

For another great performance, a salute

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	YTD	Past 1 Year	Past 2 Years	Past 3 Years
ALFM Peso Bond Fund	6.37%	9.52%	17.92%	26.97%

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** All returns are absolute (net) as of August 30, 2006.*

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U.S. Treasury Note yield of 2.65% by 83 basis points. On a year-on-year (YOY) basis, ALFM Dollar's net return of 5.33% also outclassed its benchmark's yield of 3.70%, by 163 basis points.

The newest member of the ALFM Family, the ALFM Euro Bond Fund - the country's first euro-incorporated mutual fund - has topped the NAV of its lone competitor to become the biggest euro fund by June 2006. Although the European Central Bank has been increasing its interest rates over the last few months, ALFM Euro has been able to provide its investors an absolute net YTD ROI of 2.57% as of August 30, 2006, 97 basis points better than the 1-Year German Treasury Bill's absolute YTD net yield of 1.60%. Over the past year, ALFM Euro Bond Fund has been able to post a net return of 2.90% versus its benchmark's YOY net yield of 2.10%.

Recent data from ICAP (Investment Company Association of the Philippines) also show that the ALFM Family of Funds has outperformed not only its benchmarks but also its closest competitors who offer funds to the general public. This is further proof that diversifying one's investments in the ALFM Family of Funds pays off better than with other mutual funds.

With its impressive performance, top-notch fund management and wide selection of funds, what else should investors look forward to in the ALFM Family of Funds? Long-time mutual fund investors as well as those new to mutual funds should be glad to know that the future looks bright for the ALFM Family of Funds.

Rank	Peso Bond Funds*	YTD Absolute Return (%) as of Aug. 30, 2006
1	ALFM Peso Bond Fund	6.37%
2	Sun Life Prosperity Bond Fund, Inc.	6.07%
3	Cocolife Fixed Income Fund, Inc.	5.99%
4	First Metro Save and Learn Fixed Income Fund	5.99%
5	Philam Bond Fund, Inc.	5.80%
Rank	**US Dollar Bond Funds**	**YTD Absolute Return (%) as of Aug. 30, 2006**
1	ALFM Dollar Bond Fund, Inc. (USD)	3.48%
2	Grepalife Dollar Bond Fund (USD)	3.13%
3	Philam Dollar Bond Fund, Inc. (USD)	2.91%
4	Sun Life Prosperity Dollar Abundance Fund (USD)	2.44%
5	MAA Privilege Dollar Fixed Income Fund, Inc. (USD)	0.78%
Rank	**Euro Bond Funds**	**YTD Absolute Return (%) as of Aug. 30, 2006**
1	ALFM Euro Bond Fund, Inc.	2.57%
2	MAA Privilege Euro Fixed Income Fund, Inc.	2.10%

* *Funds available to the general public*

Source: Investment Company Association of the Philippines (ICAP) website: www.icap.com.ph

A good time to be a mutual fund investor

Mr. Sison is optimistic about the further growth of the mutual fund industry, which is in the early stages of development in the Philippines. He noted a significant rise in the number of companies offering mutual fund products every year. To date, there are now 34 companies offering mutual funds in the country. Despite this trend, ALFM Family of Funds, as seen in its rapid fund growth and exceptional performance, continues to be among the preferred funds of investors, truly, the Investors' No. 1 choice.

Mutual fund investing made easy

A mutual fund is, simply put, a collective investment from various investors, pooled together and managed by a fund manager according to pre-determined investment objectives.

A mutual fund allows individuals and institutional investors to form a massive asset base without raising too much capital individually. The assets are then entrusted to a full-time professional fund manager who decides on and maintains a diversified portfolio of security investments based on the particular fund's investment objective as set forth in its prospectus.

Unlike listed stocks, the prices of which may fluctuate on a per minute basis, mutual funds are priced only once daily, based on what the securities in the portfolio are worth. The price per share, or net asset value (NAV) per share, of a mutual fund is the current market value of the fund's net assets divided by the total number of shares outstanding at such valuation date.

So why should you invest in a mutual fund?

Diversifying to ensure investor's positive returns

Diversification is one of the main reasons for investing in mutual funds. Seasoned investors are aware of the risks associated with financial markets, which can affect various investment instruments.

Mutual fund investing is a good way to diversify your investments without having to raise high amounts to be able to invest in various securities. Mutual funds also give you instant diversification since a mutual fund invests in various securities and instruments. The key to being successful in mutual fund investing is to gather enough information about the fund prior to investing - see what the investment objectives are, where the fund is investing, identifying your risk parameters, and choosing a reliable and reputable fund manager.

While the risks can never be eliminated, a mutual fund investment can give investors potential gains due to exposures in dozens of securities, thereby spreading risk across a range of securities and minimizing the impact of possible losses from one underperforming securities.

Investing made hassle-free

Maintaining a portfolio of stocks or bonds can be complicated for an individual investor. This often requires extensive knowledge of financial markets and an inordinate amount of time. Mutual funds greatly simplify the investment process by providing investors a ready-made professionally managed portfolio at a reasonable cost.

Mutual fund shares can also be readily bought and sold at a market price calculated daily. An investor needs only a minimal amount to be able to invest in any of the mutual funds available in the country. These initial investments are substantially lower than investing individually in various securities.

Mutual funds are also very liquid investments, allowing investors to withdraw or redeem their investments at any time, even during the minimum holding period set by the fund, subject to a nominal early redemption penalty.

Expert management enjoyed from industry professionals at a fraction of the cost

Hiring a financial advisor can be costly for an individual investor. With a mutual fund, investors readily enjoy the services of top-notch financial experts and industry professionals who have had extensive experience and knowledge in buying and selling securities.

Since mutual funds are pooled funds, the expenses of managing the fund and also maintaining a fund management group is also greatly reduced since expenses are also spread over the total fund size.

For most people, inherent risks in mutual funds often scare them away and lead them back to more traditional forms of savings - deposits and such. However, with a mutual fund, professional fund management is also often the key to determining the success of a fund.

A mutual fund will always have a prospectus that will include details about the fund and the fund manager.

In summary, investing in mutual funds may carry inherent risks. However, the advantages of investing far outweigh the disadvantages. And these advantages become even more favorable once you have chosen the right mutual fund to invest in.

NCORE! ENCORE!

to the ALFM Family of Mutual Funds.

deserves a round of applause. Through strong fund management and distinct risk management strategies,
this complete line of bond funds bested their competitors in their respective categories. Proving once more
that it's indeed the investor's no. 1 choice.

ast Year	Past 2 Years	Past 3 Years
3%	9.11%	12.68%

	YTD	Past 1 Year
ALFM Euro Bond Fund	2.57%	2.90%

ALFM
FAMILY OF FUNDS
Invest your future in our family.

A mutual fund is an open-end investment company registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in which the investible cash of numerous investors are pooled with the aim of achieving a specific investment objective. MUTUAL FUNDS ARE NOT DEPOSIT PRODUCTS AND, AS SUCH, YIELDS ARE NOT GUARANTEED. Mutual funds are not PDIC-insured. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results.

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try. As of August 30, 2006, ALFM Dollar
ROI of 3.48%, outperforming the 1-Year U.S. Treasury Note yield of 2.65% by 83 basis points. On a year-on-year (YOY) basis, ALFM Dollar's net return of 5.33% also outclassed its benchmark's yield of 3.70%, by 163 basis points.

The newest member of the ALFM Family, the ALFM Euro Bond Fund - the country's first euro-incorporated mutual fund - has topped the NAV of its lone competitor to become the biggest euro fund by June 2006. Although the European Central Bank has been increasing its interest rates over the last few months, ALFM Euro has been able to provide its investors an absolute net YTD ROI of 2.57% as of August 30, 2006, 97 basis points better than the 1-Year German Treasury Bill's absolute YTD net yield of 1.60%. Over the past year, ALFM Euro Bond Fund has been able to post a net return of 2.90% versus its benchmark's YOY net yield of 2.10%.

Recent data from ICAP (Investment Company Association of the Philippines) also show that the ALFM Family of Funds has outperformed not only its benchmarks but also its closest competitors who offer funds to the general public. This is further proof that diversifying one's investments in the ALFM Family of Funds pays off better than with other mutual funds.

With its impressive performance, top-notch fund management and wide selection of funds, what else should investors look forward to in the ALFM Family of Funds? Long-time mutual fund investors as well as those new to mutual funds should be glad to know that the future looks bright for the ALFM Family of Funds.

Rank	Peso Bond Fund	YTD [illegible]
1	ALFM Peso Bond Fund	6.37%
2	Sun Life Prosperity Bond Fund, Inc.	6.07%
3	Cocolife Fixed Income Fund, Inc.	5.99%
4	First Metro Save and Learn Fixed Income Fund	5.99%
5	Philam Bond Fund, Inc.	5.80%

Rank	US Dollar Bond Funds	YTD [illegible]
1	ALFM Dollar Bond Fund, Inc. (USD)	3.48%
2	Grepalife Dollar Bond Fund (USD)	3.13%
3	Philam Dollar Bond Fund, Inc. (USD)	2.91%
4	Sun Life Prosperity Dollar Abundance Fund (USD)	2.44%
5	MAA Privilege Dollar Fixed Income Fund, Inc. (USD)	0.78%

Rank	Euro Bond Funds	YTD [illegible]
1	ALFM Euro Bond Fund, Inc.	2.57%
2	MAA Privilege Euro Fixed Income Fund, Inc.	2.10%

** Funds available to the general public*

Source: Investment Company Association of the Philippines (ICAP) website: www.icap.com.ph

A good time to be a mutual fund investor

Mr. Sison is optimistic about the further growth of the mutual fund industry, which is in the early stages of development in the Philippines. He noted a significant rise in the number of companies offering mutual fund products every year. To date, there are now 34 companies offering mutual funds in the country. Despite this trend, ALFM Family of Funds, as seen in its rapid fund growth and exceptional performance, continues to be among the preferred funds of investors, truly, the Investors' No. 1 choice.

Mutual fund Investing made easy

[illegible]

NCORE! ENCORE!

to the ALFM Family of Mutual Funds.

deserves a round of applause. Through strong fund management and distinct risk management strategies,
this complete line of bond funds bested their competitors in their respective categories. Proving once more
that it's indeed the investor's no. 1 choice.

ast ear	Past 2 Years	Past 3 Years
3%	9.11%	12.68%

	YTD	Past 1 Year
ALFM Euro Bond Fund	2.57%	2.90%

ALFM
FAMILY OF FUNDS
Invest your future in our family.

A mutual fund is an open-end investment company registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in which the investible cash of numerous investors are pooled with the aim of achieving a specific investment objective. MUTUAL FUNDS ARE NOT DEPOSIT PRODUCTS AND, AS SUCH, YIELDS ARE NOT GUARANTEED. Mutual funds are not PDIC-insured. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live,
even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

Amparo S. Lardizabal Ph.D.

Educator, Dean Emeritus College of Education,
University of the East, former member,
Board of Trustees, University of the East;
Dean, Graduate School, Arellano University

Peacefully joined her Creator
on September 3, 2006 at the age of 98.

Her son, **Henry** & daughter-in-law **Norma Enverga**, and daughter **Aida San Juan**, grandchildren and great grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and other relatives, request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Mt. Carmel Church in Broadway, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, September 9, 2006 at the La Loma Catholic Cemetery in Manila after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

HIS EMINENCE GAUDENCIO B. CARDINAL ROSALES, D.D.
Archbishop of Manila

The auxiliary bishops and clergy of the Archdiocese of Manila,
bereaved sister **Rosario**, nephews, nieces, grandnephews, grandnieces,
relatives and friends

deeply mourn the demise of

REV. MSGR. CANDIDO VIDAL M. BERNAL

who passed away on September 3, 2006 at the age of 96.

Monsignor Bernal is a retired priest of the Archdiocese of Manila and former Parish Priest of Nuestra Señora del Perpetuo Socorro Parish (Our Lady of Perpetual Help), 2042 Calamba Street, Sampaloc, Manila.

His remains now lie in state at the Nuestra Señora del Perpetuo Socorro Parish.

Funeral Mass will be on Friday, September 8, 2006 at 9:00 A.M. at the above-mentioned parish church. Interment follows at the La Loma Cemetery, Kalookan City.

The faithful are requested to pray for the repose of his soul.

Death Notices

ATTY. ELADIO "ADYONG" A. CALIWARA
February 18, 1915 - September 2, 2006

His remains lie in state at the Nacional Memorial Homes in Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Requiem Holy Mass will be held at 9:00 o'clock in the morning today, September 6, 2006 at the Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City. Necrological Rites will be held thereafter, and interment will follow at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

ALFONSO V. DELA CRUZ
(August 2, 1920 – August 31, 2006)

His remains lie in state at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapel, Sucat, Parañaque. Cremation tomorrow, September 7, 2006, at 2:00 p.m.

ILOILO II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
(ILECO II)
Pototan, Iloilo

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFICATION AND TO BID

ILECO II is inviting interested contractors to apply for accreditation and to bid for the SUPPLY OF LABOR AND MATERIALS OF 13.2/7.62 KV DISTRIBUTION LINE EXTENSION PROJECT to different sitios and barangays in the 4th district of the Province of Iloilo.

Activities	Schedule
Accreditation of contractors	September 5 - 30, 2006
Invitation of Bidders	September 11 - October 2, 2006
Pre-Bid Conference	October 3, 2006 at 2 PM (Main Office)
Opening and Evaluation of Bid	October 10, 2006 at 2 PM (Main Office)
Notice of Award	October 12, 2006

Prospective bidders have to submit their updated company profile address to Mr. Fernando Lasafin, PBAC Chairman, ILECO II, Cauayan, Pototan, Iloilo. They should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last three years. Financial Standing of the contractor will be evaluated as to capability to accomplish the project.

Invitation and Issuance of bid documents will be sent to the qualified bidders after paying Non-Refundable Registration Fee of One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php 1,500.00).

ILECO II reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject Bids at any time prior to award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidders(s).

For more information, please contact the PBAC Secretariat at Telefax No. (033) 529-8064 or call Mr. Fernando Lasafin at (033) 529-8063 or Cell No. 0920-918-0339 and Engr. Redmond Roquios Cell No. 0918-902-3703.

(Sgd.) **Fernando Lasafin**
PBAC Chairman

(PDI--Sept. 6, 2006)

CAGELCO II

INVITATION TO BID

The **CAGAYAN II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**, in compliance with the Energy Regulatory Commission's (ERC) "Guidelines for Recovery of Costs for the Generation Component of Distribution Utilities Rates", which took effect on May 9, 2004, invites potential bidders - Existing or New Generation Companies – to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply of CAGELCO II's partial electricity requirements in the nominal capacity of approximately 12,000 kilowatts (kW).

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures. Interested bidders shall comply with Accreditation Requirements and submit Letter of Intent to:

PRE-BID AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
CAGAYAN II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
MACANAYA DISTRICT, APARRI, CAGAYAN
Telefax Nos. 078-888-2940 / 078-888-2941
E-MAIL ADDRESS: cagelco2main@digitelone.com

Bidding requirements and schedule of activities are as follows:

BIDDING SCHEDULE	
Release of Invitation to Bid (two publications)	August 30, 2006 and September 06, 2006
Intent to Respond Forms Due	September 14, 2006
Accreditation Period	September 15 to 24, 2006
Pre-Bid Conference	October 01, 2006
Conduct of Public Bidding	October 11, 2006

Cost of Bidding Documents (non refundable) – Php 10,000.00

CAGELCO II reserves the right to reject any or all bids without any reason, to waive any formalities therein, to accept proposal most advantageous to the cooperative and to assume no obligation to compensate or indemnify any bidder for expenses or losses that may be incurred in the preparation of bid nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) BLANDINA Y. MADAMBA
ISD Manager /PBAC Chairman

(PDI - Aug. 30 & Sept. 6, 2006)

CAGAYAN 1 ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Maddarulug, Solana, Cagayan
Tel. Nos. 844-1596, 501-0062

INVITATION TO BID

The CAGAYAN 1 ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC., in compliance with the Energy Regulatory Commission invites eligible Bidders to supply a 10 megawatt (10MW) energy requirement for CAGELCO 1 franchise area commending in 2010. Due to the impending power shortages indicated in the Department of Energy (DOE) Power Development Plan, preference will be given to new and clean generation capacity to supply the energy requirements of CAGELCO 1 franchise area.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures. Interested bidders shall comply with Accreditation Requirements and submit Letter of Intent to:

PRE-BID AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
CAGAYAN 1 MAIN OFFICE
Maddarulug, Solana, Cagayan
Telephone Nos. 078-844-1595; 501-0062, 501-0882
Fax No. 078-844-4528
E-mail address: cagelco1@yahoo.com

Bidding requirements and schedule of activities are as follows:

BIDDING SCHEDULE	
Release of Invitation to Bid (two publications)	August 30, 2006 and September 06, 2006
Intent to Respond Forms Due	September 14, 2006
Accreditation Period	September 15 to 24, 2006
Pre-Bid Conference	October 01, 2006
Conduct of Public Bidding	October 11, 2006

Cost of Bidding Documents (non refundable) – Php 10,000.00

CAGELCO 1 hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formalities therein and to accept such bid as may be considered advantageous to the cooperative.

(Sgd.) NENITA B. GUZMAN
PBAC Chairman

(PDI – Aug. 30 & Sept. 6, 2006)

More Classified Ads
SSS A2
Supreme Court A6
GSIS A21
MWSS A24
Transco B10

CLASSIFIEDS

Is our economy on the upswing?

POPULAR SOLITA C. MONSOD, A highly respected economist, former Neda Secretary, UP Professor and now the distaff side of the highly rated TV Show "Mare-Pare", will give her prognosis on real estate and the Philippine economy in general. She will be the keynote speaker for Symposium 2006 titled "The Economy and Real Estate...On the Upswing?"

Rep. Eduardo C. Zialcita, himself a realtor and established real estate developer, will discuss laws on real estate being deliberated in Congress and particularly those that the Lower House has passed but await Senate approval. As the Chairman of the Committee on Housing and Urban Development, he will discuss the relevance and importance of these latest bills for the real estate industry and practitioners.

Rounding up the strong line-up of dynamic speakers representing the private sector will be the president of Landco Pacific Corp Alfred Xerex-Burgos, Jr. Burgos will give the latest trends in real estate developments, current marketing strategies, and the future of the real estate market and industry in the Philippines.

MONSOD

This symposium is annually organized by the Pareb-Quezon City Realtors Board, Inc (QCRB) for its members and their clients and for those who are engaged in real estate as developers, brokers, appraisers, financiers, agents, as well as the consumers and investors thinking of investing in real estate.

"The Economy and Real Estate.. On the Upswing?" will be held on Sept. 12, at the Kalayaan Hall of Club Filipino from 1pm to 6pm. Call 9126137 or 9125807, or text Cel (0915)-7809363 for more information or reservation.

Program stresses skills for college success

WHAT KIND OF EDUCATION can give students the skills to succeed at university and beyond? Can any school or program equip a student with the right gear to do "battle" in the real-world?

Southville International School and Colleges (SISC) can. Located in Las Piñas City, SISC is one of the few authorized schools in the Philippines that offers the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program. The rigorous IB Diploma was developed to provide highly motivated secondary school students of diverse cultural and academic backgrounds with a pre-university course of studying using curriculum standards recognized throughout the world.

The program provides the students with an in-depth study of subjects in the fields of Science, Mathematics, Language, Arts and Electives that would enable them to master their skills in the said academic areas. The program would serve as a preparation ground for students to enhance and strengthen their skills before entering college.

The IB Diploma is increasingly becoming a passport to post-secondary education in top universities around the world. Some universities in other countries are offering IB students a range of considerations-from admissions advantages, course or full-year credits, to scholarships. Locally, the University of the Philippines welcomes IB Diploma holders to its non-quota courses without having to take the UP College Admission Test.

Southville International School and Colleges' International Baccalaureate Program is now processing applications for school year 2006-2007. SISC offers 50 percent lower tuition compared to other international schools. For inquiries, call Anthony Calado (The IB Diploma Coordinator of SISC) at 8204035.

Virgin of Peñafrancia Festivities in Metro Manila

VIVA LA VIRGEN DE Peñafrancia!

The Peñafrancia Devotees Association of Metro Manila, headed by its President, Dr. Charito-Felipe, is inviting everyone to the Annual Metro Manila Festivities in celebration of the Feast of the Virgin of Peñafrancia, the miraculous Patroness of the Bicol Region.

After a motorcade procession at 2:30 p.m.on Wednesday, Sept. 7 through the major streets of Mandaluyong and Makati, a Triduum of Novena Prayers and Masses for "INA" will be held at the St. Andrew the Apostle Church at Nicanor Garcia St. (Reposo St.) Bel-Air, Makati, every 6 p.m. on Sept. 7, 8, and 9.

After the closing novena prayers, at 2 p.m., on Sunday, Sept. 10, a motorcade bearing the Image of the Virgin of Peñafrancia will start at the St. Andrew the Apostle Parish Church to the Central Post Office Building, Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila. From there, a procession at 4 p.m. to the Manila Cathedral will follow, with the female devotees and volunteers taking turns in carrying the Image of "Ina".

A concelebrated High Mass at the Manila Cathedral, led by Bishop Nestor C. Cariño, will highlight the festivities at 6 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 10.

All devotees are invited to join in honoring and thanking "Ina" in these Triduum of Novenas, Processions and Masses.

For inquiries, please call the Peñafrancia Devotees Association's Secretariat at 531-5177, 531-9430, 531-5906 and 531-6158.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldng., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
DELL INTERNATIONAL SERVICE PHILIPPINES INC. 27/F, RCBC Plaza Tower 2, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Prabhakar Raju Pakalpati	Process Director
IBM BUSINESS SERVICES INC. 18/F Cyberone Mall, Eastwood City Libis, Quezon City	Timothy James Klepp	Manila Delivery Project Executive
DIGITEL MOBILE PHILS. INC. 29/F Galleria Corporate Center Ortigas Ave. cor. EDSA Quezon City	Shurish Subbramaniam	Technical Advisor and Head of Network Operations Center
BUYOUNG MULTI-TRADING & SERVICES INC. 2944 Gen. del Pilar St., Bangkal, Makati City	Ha Young Jeong	General Manager
KOREAN AIRLINES CO., INC. **G/F LPL Plaza Bldg., No. 124** Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Jae Kab Kang	NAIA and Cebu Station Manager Phils.
BRITISH EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION INC. 36th St. University Park Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City	Siok Huang Tee	Part-Time Teacher
CHINA GEO-ENG'G (PHIL.) CORPORATION 15 Mindanao St., Marina Baytown East Subd., Parañaque City	Fujun Wang	Admin Manager
GAMEE CORPORATION Lower Ground Floor, Bldg. A SM City, Bicutan Doña Soledad Ave., Parañaque City	Mi Hee Kim (w/o Lee)	Marketing and Product Manager
SHARP (PHILS.) CORPORATION Km. 23, West Service Rd., South Superhighway, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Masato Fujie	Assistant Vice President and Division General Manager
SPI NETHERLANDS B.V. SPI Bldg., Pascor Drive, Sto. Niño Parañaque City	Sameer Raina	Corporate Development Manager
CHINA GEO-ENG'G (PHIL.) CORP. 15 Mindanao Street Marina Baytown East Subd. Parañaque City	Lijun Liu	Accountant

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

f: LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI--September 6, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON
Provincial Capitol Malaybalay City
Tel. # 088-221-4820 & Telefax # 088-221-2537
E-mail Add: buk_provl_bac@yahoo.com.ph
OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR
Bids and Awards Committee

Standard Form Number 10
Revised on July 24, 2004
Contract Reference Number 139-760-08-00

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF BUKIDNON, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid and re-bid for the hereunder projects:

NAME OF THE PROJECT : Project IV – Medical Equipment – For the use in Bukidnon Provincial Hospital in Maramag and Manolo Fortich
Project V – Drugs and Medicines
FOR RE-BID (2nd Semester 2006)
Project I – Drugs and Medicines
Project II – Medical, Laboratory Supplies and Reagents
Project III – Plasma Freezer
LOCATION : Provincial General Services Office
BRIEF DESCRIPTION : For the use of Seven (7) Provincial Hospitals and Twenty Two (22) Health Stations for the second semester of CY 2006.
Approved Budget for the contract : Project IV – P32,787,472.00
Project V – P1,814,902.36
FOR RE-BID (2nd Semester 2006)
Project I – P3,087,880.73
Project II – P1,550,778.23
Project III – P700,000.00
DELIVERY PERIOD : 60 calendar days upon receipt of Notice to proceed for Medical equipment
: 15 working days upon receipt of Notice to Proceed for Drugs and Medicines, Medical, Laboratory's Supplies and Reagents.
PLACE OF DELIVERY : Provincial General Services Office, Capitol Compound, Malaybalay City

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-qualification and award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	August 31-Sept. 05, 2006
2. Pre-bid conference	September 04, 2006
3. Application for Eligibility	September 08, 2006
4. Opening of Bids Deadline for the submission of Bid documents	September 19, 2006 at 10:00 A.M. September 19, 2006 not later than 9:00 A.M.
5. Bid Evaluation	September 22, 2006
6. Post-qualification	September 26, 2006
7. Notice of Award	September 29, 2006

Bid Documents will be available only to Prospective Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P500.00 each for re-bid both Project 1 & 2, P2,000.00 for Project III, P5,000.00 for Project IV and P500.00 for Project V, at the Provincial Treasurer's Office.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the BAC office, Capitol Compound, Malaybalay City. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security equal to 1% for Cash, Certified check, Cashier's check, Manager's Check, Bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit; 1.5% for Bank guarantee; 2.5% for Surety bond of the Approved Budget for the Contract as advertised. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

The Province of Bukidnon reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Contact Person: Ma. Joe-an P. Bayona

Approved by:
(Sgd.) JOSEFREDIE F. FLORES
Prov'l. Admin/BAC Chairman

(PDI–August 31 & Sept. 6, 2006)

Pag-IBIG first half net income jumps 22% at P4.54-B

THE PAG-IBIG FUND, one of the country's leading financial institutions and the biggest financier of housing loans in the country, continues its solid performance in stimulating the economy through its savings and housing finance systems.

For the first six months of the year, the Fund posted a net income of P4.54 billion, representing a 22 percent growth from last year's P3.73 billion. The robust growth is primarily attributed to the increased income generated from its retail housing and multi-purpose loan (MPL) programs at 16 and 26 percent, respectively.

Total revenues climbed to nearly P8 billion. More than half of the total came from housing-related assets at P4.15 billion. Investments contributed P2.20 billion while short-term loans accounted for P1.61 billion.

Meanwhile, the assets of the corporation jumped 4.63 percent to a record level of P186.56 billion. The increase is spurred by the growth in membership contributions amounting to P3.70 billion and net earnings at P4.54 billion. Total resources are projected to reach P200 billion by year-end.

Collections for the first half of the year stood at P20.52 billion, or a 14.84 percent increase over the same period last year.

Lawyer Romero Quimbo, president and CEO of the Fund, said, "we owe these solid results to our 6.3 million members across the country. Managing our members' money in the most efficient manner is an imperative."

The continued strong financial performance of the Pag-IBIG Fund means more benefits for its members. Nearly P20 billion in benefits was released by the Fund from January to June 2006 — P10.62 billion for MPL, helping members address their immediate financial requirements; P7.18 billion for individual housing loan borrowers; and P2.05 billion to members who either retired or opted to get their savings.

IMMIGRATION AUSTRALIA

ELPIDIO JNR. BAUTISTA
Registered Migration Agent-
MARN 0002606
Tel. No. (02) 931-4046
or (02) 951-0180
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- Valenzuela 440-0142
- Angeles City 045-626-1487
- Batangas City 043-980-2046
- Davao City 082-227-6799
- Head Office 926-8200

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Agencia de Makati
Tel# 889-7956

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(Full time or Part time)

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or e-mail your resumé to **melene12@hotmail.com**

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5282

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID / REBID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

	Approved Budget
2 pcs. of 245 KV Circuit Power Breakers under FGD 61409	PHP 3,370,800.00
Various Sizes of Casing Head Flanges under FGT 53769 and FGT 61979	**Approved Budget**
Item 1	PHP 4,623,000.00
Item 2	PHP 846,000.00
LOT OFFER	PHP 5,469,000.00

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Ms. Maria Cristina Lynn M. Mercado** starting **September 5, 2006** and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **September 14, 2006, 2:00 p.m.** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Wall Clock Time)** of **September 28, 2006**. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee I

(PDI–Sept. 6 & 13, 2006)

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NOTICE TO ALL BUSINESS NAME REGISTRANTS

PURSUANT TO SECTION 12 (A) OF DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 15 SERIES OF 1990, THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY THROUGH THE BUREAU OF TRADE REGULATION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION, CANCELS FROM THE RECORD ALL BUSINESS NAME REGISTRATIONS WHICH EXPIRED AS OF **MARCH 31, 2006 EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2006.**

UNDER THE BUSINESS NAME LAW (ACT NO. 3883), AS AMENDED, OWNERS OR PROPRIETORS SHOULD RENEW THEIR BUSINESS NAME REGISTRATION UPON EXPIRATION THEREOF.

THIS ANNOUNCEMENT SERVES AS A FORMAL NOTICE TO ALL CONCERNED.

FOR STRICT COMPLIANCE.

06 September 2006, Makati City.

(Sgd.) **Victorio Mario A. Dimagiba**
Director, BTRCP

(PDI--Sept. 6, 2006)

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JOB Market

NFA's palay negotiable warehouse receipt program helps farmers

DAET, CAMARINES NORTE - TO HELP PALAY farmers maximize their earnings through proper timing in the disposition and sale of their stocks, the National Food Authority has introduced its Palay Negotiable Warehouse Receipt Program (PNWRP) to palay farmers from this province.

Under the PNWRP, farmers' cooperatives may deposit their stocks for free in NFA-designated warehouses nationwide for six months. They will be issued PNWRP receipts which may be used as collateral to loans from individual financiers and participating government and private financial institutions.

The countryside Multi-line Cooperative of Daet, Camarines Norte has been one of the first beneficiaries of the program. The Cooperative has stored 719 bags of palay.

The cooperative was able to save in warehouse rental at P1.17 per bag per month and stock maintenance of P0.68 per bag.

NFA provincial manager Bernardo Asetre said the NFA's PNWRP will be able to help farmers command a better price for their stocks once prices become viable in the market.

For more information on NFA programs, the public may send their inquiries through the Text NFA at 0917-6210927.

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- Male or female, 25-35 years old
- Proficient communication skills in English and Pilipino
- Willing to travel anywhere in the Philippines
- Preferably with experience in dealing with electric cooperatives

SALES ENGINEER

- Male, 25-35 years old, college graduate
- Proficient communication skills in English, Pilipino and/or Chinese
- Computer literate
- With 2 years experience in the field of commercial and industrial lighting
- Willing to travel to the provinces

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Tel. Nos. 927-36-27, 435-42-31

NOTICE OF LOST RECEIPT

Maynilad Water Services Inc. is advising its customers that Official Receipt Numbers 3073882 to 900 assigned to the South Caloocan Business Center were declared stolen.

In view of the above, the public is warned that Maynilad Water will not honor any transaction involving **O.R. Nos. 3073882 to 900.**

Maynilad is urging its customers to report any information concerning the missing receipt to Maynilad's Treasury Department at tel. no. 4353575, or they may call Maynilad Hotline 1626 or 4362000.

(PDI - Sept. 6, 2006)

BIARSP

INVITATION TO BID

Rehabilitation of DAR Municipal and Provincial Offices

The **Belgian Integrated Agrarian Reform Programme** (BIARSP) is a bilateral development programme between the Governments of the Philippines and Belgium. Its aim is to assist the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) to successfully complete the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

BIARSP is currently on its third and final phase of implementation. BIARSP is highly regarded on account of its integrated approach covering not only agricultural support services but also education, public health and institutional capacity building.

To further strengthen the programme's implementation, BIARSP supports its lead partner agency, the DAR, in upgrading the physical state of its field offices in regions 7 and 9 to provide a conducive working environment for its staff and have efficient delivery of service. The rehabilitation of one municipal office (DAR Sidira with an estimated budget of PhP 931,695.57) and three provincial offices (DAR Zamboanga del Norte, and DAR Basilan and DAR Resettlement Office, Cebu with an estimated budget of PhP 3,500,000.00, PhP 1,912,175.68 and PhP 2,500,00 respectively) are found to be necessary.

The BIARSP-Technical Support and Coordination Office (TSCO) therefore invites eligible contractors who are accredited by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board qualified for retrofitting buildings between PhP1,000,000 to 4,000,000 or with corresponding record to bid for the rehabilitation of one or more of said offices.

Interested parties are requested to submit the following documents: company profile, description/experience of similar assignments, 2005 BIR certification of registration and business permit to BIARSP TSCO. Please download the General Conditions (Terms of Reference) for the tender from our website **www.biarsptsco.org** under the category "opportunities". The deadline for the submission of bids is on October 15, 2006. For further queries you may contact us through any of the following:

E-mail : **tsco@biarsptsco.org**
Post : BIARSP – TSCO, 2nd Floor Sol Y Mar Bldg.,
Cor. Rizal Blvd. – San Juan Street,
6200 Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental
Fax : (035) 422-7736
Tel. #s : (035) 225-5929; 225-5930; 225-8681; and 422-7459
Contact Person : Mayena Llosa, Administrative Officer

(PDI–Sept. 6 & 10, 2006)

INQUIRER JOB Market Part 1 More jobs on Section M Where You Find The Best

Gov't needs to borrow ₱390.7B in '07

To pay maturing debts, plug ₱63-B budget gap

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT plans to borrow P390.7 billion in 2007 to finance maturing obligations and plug the projected budget deficit of P63 billion, a Department of Finance report showed.

The borrowing program for next year is 26.5 percent lower than the 2006 level of P531.6 billion. In 2005, government borrowings hit P615.4 billion.

Fiscal authorities said the decline in the government's borrowing requirement could be attributed to the improving fiscal climate, characterized by a the declining budget deficit.

The budget deficit for this year is projected to hit not more than P125 billion, an improvement from last year's P146.8 billion. The gap is expected to further drop to only P63 billion in 2007.

DOF data showed that of the 2007 borrowing requirement, P130.6 billion would be raised overseas while the bulk of P260.1 billion would come from domestic sources.

The government has adopted a policy of borrowing more from domestic sources to minimize the country exposure to foreign exchange rate volatility.

Foreign borrowings are normally undertaken through flotation of sovereign bonds or by tapping official development assistance from multilateral and bilateral agencies. The country's biggest ODA sources are the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, Asian Development Bank and World Bank.

Domestic borrowings are done through the regular auction of treasury bills and bonds.

About P303.8 billion of the total borrowing program for next year will be used to pay maturing obligations—P232.2 billion domestic liabilities and P71.6 billion in foreign borrowings.

The government has been allotting a huge part of its annual borrowing program for debt payment.

The government's outstanding debt as of end-May stood at P4.017 trillion.

Finance officials said, however, that the ratio of the government's debt to the country's gross domestic product (GDP) would decline next year to only 62.1 percent from the estimated P67.7 percent this year and the 71.7 percent recorded in 2005.

The expected improvement in the debt-to-GDP ratio next year is anchored on the projected economic expansion next year.

Lafayette seeks 60-day extension of test run

By Christine A. Gaylican

MINING FIRM LAFAYETTE Philippines Inc. has sought a 60-day extension of the test run of its Rapu Rapu Polymetallic mines in Legaspi, Albay to further establish the safety and viability of the mining facilities.

The company has passed the first two stages of its 30-day test run. However, company officials said Lafayette wanted to show that it passed the test run "not just by chance."

Company lawyer and spokesperson Bayani H. Agabin said Lafayette had filed with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Pollution Abjudication Board a motion for the extension of an order that temporarily lifted the suspension of the company's operations.

Rapu Rapu's operations were suspended earlier due to cyanide spill.

Lafayette has until Sept. 9 to conclude the third stage of the test run, which was the most critical as it was during this stage that the firm would do the actual processing of the ore using cyanide.

"So far all the tests—even on the quality of water and the cyanide acidity—showed that the company was in compliance with DENR standards but the test runs for the third stage have yet to be completed," said Mines and Geosciences Bureau environment division head Michael Cabalda in an interview.

To be allowed to resume the full operations of Rapu Rapu mines, Lafayette has to pass the three stages of the test run.

Lafayette has passed the first phase involved the testing of the company's pollution devices, specifically its mine tailings pond. The second phase involved the test run of its mineral crusher and grinders using non-metal ores. The third phase, which started on Aug. 25, involves the review of the mining facility's milling recovery efficiency.

Chemrez to start shipping out biodiesel

By Abigail L. Ho

BIODIESEL PRODUCER CHEMREZ Inc. will start the weekly shipment of 500,000 liters of its product to Germany this week.

It is also exploring the possibility of tapping Asian markets.

Chemrez chief operating officer Dean Lao Jr. said the company hoped to sustain its shipments to Germany, as well as to export its biodiesel to countries such as China, Taiwan, Korea and Malaysia.

"If we can meet (Germany's) demand, we'll be shipping 500,000 liters a week. We'll also be shipping to Australia, although not as big a volume as in Germany," he said in an interview.

He explained that the Germany orders started when Chemrez's initial biodiesel delivery of 40,000 liters passed stringent evaluation and assessment there.

The Australian shipments, on the other hand, were not as big as those to Germany, he said, but were definitely of a "sizable amount" that was "bigger than local demand."

He did not say how much the local demand was, at present, saying only that it had not picked up as expected.

"Local demand is not growing as fast as we had expected. It's registering low growth right now as consumers remain skeptical of the product. Even if we say they can generate savings by using biodiesel, some people are always out to prove us wrong," he said.

With local demand still very low, he said it made sense for Chemrez to tap into overseas markets that were already increasing their use of biofuels.

Chemrez is currently negotiating for biodiesel supply deals in China, Taiwan, Korea and Malaysia.

Just last May, Chemrez inaugurated its P650-million biodiesel facility in Libis, Quezon City, allowing it to produce 60 million liters of coco-biodiesel a year.

The company is now mulling putting up a second and third plant, both of which will be able to produce 180 million liters of biodiesel annually.

One or both of these plants will be constructed in partnership with the Philippine National Oil Co. Alternative Fuels Corp.

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TransCo
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Republic of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Supply and Delivery of Various Information and Communication Technology Equipment
Reference No.: PB060802-EA0115

1. The *National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region (TRANSCO-HO)*, through the *CY2006 Corporate Budget approved by the TRANSCO Board*, intends to apply the sum of *Php 15,394,000.00* being the Total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **Supply and Delivery of Various Information and Communication Technology Equipment**. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The *TRANSCO-HO* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for *Various ICTs*. Delivery of the GOODS is required *within thirty (30) calendar days from receipt of approved Purchase Order*. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders, starting September 6 to 27, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of *Two Thousand Pesos (Php 2,000.00)*. The method of payment will be CASH. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. The *TRANSCO-HO* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on September 13, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. at same address below. Requests for clarifications on the bid documents should be submitted before the Pre-Bid Conference.
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 a.m. of September 28, 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following form and amount.

Form of Security	Amount
1 Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	1% of ABC
2 Bank guarantee	1.5% of ABC
3 Surety bond	2.5% of ABC
4 Foreign government guarantee	100% of ABC

or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

7. Bid opening shall be on September 28, 2006 / 10:00 a.m. at the *Admin Conference Room, same address below*. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
8. The *National Transmission Corporation* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr. Armando N. Ochoa, BAC Chairman
MMD Office, G/F TransCo Main Bldg.
Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road
Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No.: (632) 981-2237 / Fax No. (632) 922-8432/921-3479
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Sept. 6, 2006)

The real cost for 3 budget cars for 3 years

Text by Tessa R. Salazar
Photos by Raffy Lerma

Conclusion

LAST WEEK, INQUIRER Motoring revealed the prices of original equipment manufactured parts frequently changed on the 1.1-liter Hyundai Getz , 1.1-liter Kia Picanto and 1.0-liter Chevy Spark (all retailing under P500,000).

The retail prices, however, do not mean that the spending ends there.

Here's a hypothetical cost summation for the three cars, if you use them for three years. Based on the recommended service maintenance schedules of each car company, INQUIRER Motoring has come up with theoretical cost computation.

We say theoretical because the prices we're using are based on the present rate. Inflation will play a factor in future costs, as much as your personal driving and maintenance habits.

Here's the given: Say you rack up 20,000 km in your odometer per year, the operating costs at this distance, per car would be:

LENGTH is relative. It can be determined by the tape measure, or by your budget for the after-sales service.

KIA PICANTO 1.1 — YEAR 1

Oil filter change P191 x 3 = P573

Air filter (for aircon) P740.85 x 3 = P2,222.55

Air filter (for engine) P472 x 1 = P472

V-ribbed belt or alternator belt P296 x 1= P296

Power steering belt P494 x 1 = P494

Windshield wiper/driver P544.37 x 1 = P544.37

Windshield wiper/passenger P514.80 x 1 = P514.80

Mileage: at 15 km/liter: 20,000 km/15km = 1,333.33 liters x P38/liter = P50,666.66

Total expenses for 1st year = P55, 783.38

KIA PICANTO — YEAR 2

Oil filter change 191 x 3 = P573

Air filter (for aircon) P740.85 x 3 = P2,222.55

Air filter (for engine) P472 x 1 = P472

Spark plug (P165 x 4 pieces) P660 x 1= P660

Alternator belt P296 x 1 = P296

Power steering belt P494 x 1 = P494

Windshield wiper/driver P544.37 x 1 = P544.37

Windshield wiper/passenger P514.80 x 1 = P514.80

Pad kit-front disc brake P1,503.43 x 2 pieces x 1 = P3006.86

Shock absorbers (front and rear) 5,918.82 x 1 = P5,918.82

Tires: P2,511 or P3,170 x 4 x 1 = ranges between P10,044 and P12,680

Mileage: at 15 km/liter: 20,000 km/15 km = 1,333.33 liters x P38/liter = P50, 666.66

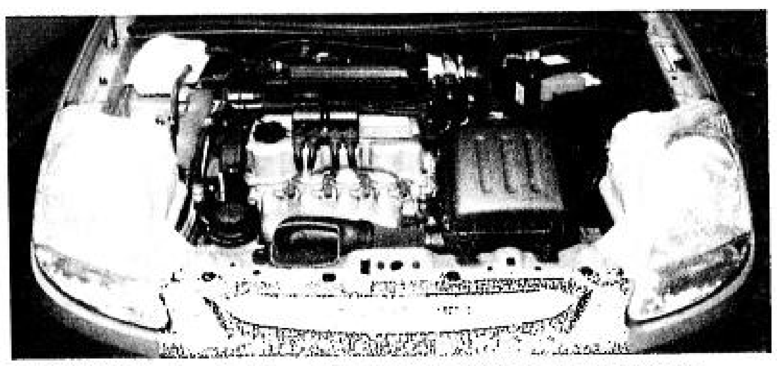
Total expenses for second year = ranging from P75,413.06 to P78,049.06

KIA PICANTO — YEAR 3

Oil filter change P191 x 3 times =P573

Fuel filter P310 x 1 = P310

THE REAL/ B2-2



IF YOU'RE buying the Spark, be prepared for more costs inside.

PICANTO'S higher air intake of the air cleaner should not be your only consideration. Prepare a budget for the spare parts inside, too.

LOOK inside the Getz's roomy engine bay and see how much the parts inside will cost you in the long run.

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MODEL	SRP	*DOWN PAYMENT	12	18	24	36	48	60	72
Optra Wagon 1.6 L M/T	808,000	99,000	63,748	43,683	33,874	24,107	19,312	16,828	15,292
Optra Wagon 1.6 L A/T	853,000	99,000	67,794	46,455	36,024	25,637	20,538	17,896	16,263

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Some of the best rewards for choosing a Frontier are found further down the road.

When you invest in a vehicle for business or personal use, you know you're in it for the long haul.

And for long-haul thinkers, it's all about how well your investment holds its worth through the years.

Nissan Frontiers are so well-built, they are known to keep working long after many other trucks have retired from service.

So it comes as no surprise that companies depreciate them over a much longer period than other vehicles.

In fact, the Frontier ranks among the best pickups when it comes to resale value.

Indeed, long-haul thinking pays off rather richly in the end.

The 2006 Frontier now comes with beige interior and dual airbags. Check it out at your local Nissan dealer.

FRONTIER. For the long haul.

FRONTIER SHIFT_the future NISSAN

The Subaru Legacy: Upbeat and urbane

THE ARRIVAL OF SUBARU IN the Philippines has created excitement among the enthusiasts who are familiar with its all-wheel drive (AWD) system and its successes at the World Rally Championship. What most people don't know is that Subaru is the only carmaker to offer an exclusive AWD model lineup in the country. In fact, even the new sport sedan, the Legacy 2.0 is equipped with the AWD making it the most distinct model in its class.

The Legacy, as the name suggests, has a rich lineage of admirers across generations of owners. The fourth-generation Legacy combines pleasurable driving performance with progressive styling and impressive packaging. The Legacy brings together pure driving enjoyment and svelte, sophisticated character in one outstanding AWD vehicle.

Praises and acclaim

Since its release in 1989, the Legacy has continued to be loved by drivers throughout the world with over 3 million units sold. The car has continually received praises and acclaim from people who know everything about cars. The basic "driving," "turning" and "stopping" performances of the Legacy have been staunchly polished, that drivers can actually feel "the high-quality performance of a Subaru."

At the heart of the Legacy is Subaru's unique symmetrical AWD which allows it to challenge any weather or road condition, maintaining traction and stability at any given time. The new Legacy's AWD system raises the full potential of the car surpassing simple numerical performance and enabling anyone to enjoy driving as they desire. By transmitting power through all four tires, the car steers naturally and neutrally in the direction of the bend.

Powering the Legacy is the legendary Subaru Boxer 2.0-liter DOHC engine that responds intelligently to the driver's every command, making the most effective use of the engine's enviable combustion efficiency. Subaru boxer engines produce greater usable power and torque across the rev range, for a more exhilarating driving experience, and yet, reduce fuel consumption and CO_2 emissions.

Latest AT technology

Building on the well-proven AWD system and totally linear drivetrain layout, the latest automatic transmission technology in the Legacy has been especially developed and refined to bring smooth and precise gear changes in all kinds of driving situations. With the Legacy, differentials and torque split systems are perfectly matched to ensure full performance and confident traction. Then, there's the extra dimension of the sequential E-4AT Sportshift which gives the driver two more gear-changing modes—Sport and Manual. The Sport mode delivers intelligent and dynamic AT driving while the Manual mode gives hands-on control of gear selection for an even greater performance drive.

The exterior design of the Legacy will surely impress with its sweeping bodylines and

THE SUBARU/ B2-5

The real cost for 3 budget cars for 3 years

From page B2-1

AIR FILTER (FOR AIRcon) P740.85 x 3 times = P2222.55

Air filter (for engine) P472 x 1 = P472

V-ribbed belt or alternator belt P296 x 1 = P296

Power steering belt P494 x 1 = P494

Windshield wiper/driver P544.37 x 1 = P544.37

Windshield wiper/passenger P514.80 x 1 = P514.80

Shoe and lining kit-rear brake P1769.69 x 1 = P1769.69

Mileage: at 15 km/liter: 20,000 km/15 km = 1,333.33 x P38/liter = P50,666.66

Year 3 Expenses = P57,863.07

TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENSES FOR 3 YRS = P189,059.51 to P191,695.51 (excluding full service menu)

GETZ 1.1 — YEAR 1

Oil filter change 162.40 x 5 times = P812

Air filter (for aircon) P947.75 x 1= P947.75

Air filter (for engine) P297 x 1 = P297

Spark plug (P131.40 x 4 pieces) P525 x 2 times = P1,051.20

V-ribbed belt or alternator belt P303.60 x 1= P303.60

Power steering belt P209.40 x 1 = P209.40

Windshield wiper/driver P138.60 x 1= P138.60

Windshield wiper/passenger P92.85 x 1 = P92.85

Mileage: at 15 km/liter: 20,000 km/15 km = 1,333.33 liters x P38/liter = P50,666.66

Total expenses for 1st year = P54,519.06

GETZ 1.1 — YEAR 2

Oil filter change P162.40 x 4 times =P649.60

Fuel filter P190.75 x 1 = P190.75

Air filter (for aircon) P947.75 x 1 = P947.75

Air filter (for engine) P297 x 1 = P297

Spark plug (P131.40 x 4 pieces) P525.60 x 2 times = P1051.20

Alternator belt P303.60 x 1= P303.60

Power steering belt P209.40 x 1 = P209.40

Windshield wiper/driver P138.60 x 1 = P138.60

Windshield wiper/passenger P92.95 x 1 = P92.95

Pad kit-front disc brake P2,421.20 x 1 = P2,421.20

Tires: P2,500 to P3100 x 4 pieces x 1 = P10,000 to P12,400

Mileage: at 15 km/liter: 20,000 km/15 km = 1,333.33 liters x P38/liter = P50,666.66

Total expenses for second year = ranging from P66,968.71 to P69,368.71

GETZ 1.1 — YEAR 3

Oil filter change P162.40 x 3 times = 649.60

Fuel filter pump P190.75 x 1 = P190.75

Air filter (for aircon) P947.75 x 1 = P947.75

Air filter (for engine) P297 x 1 = P297

V-ribbed belt or alternator belt P303.60 x 1= P303.60

Power steering belt P209.40 x 1 = P209.40

Windshield wiper/driver P138.60 x 1 = P138.60

Windshield wiper/passenger P92.95 x 1 = P92.95

Pad kit-front disc brake P2,421.20 x 1 = P2,421.20

Shoe and lining kit-rear brake P1,745.85 x 1=P1,745.85

Shock absorbers P5,999.80 (front, 2 pc already) + P1,735.20 = 7,735

Mileage: at 15 km/liter: 20,000 km/15 km = 1,333.33 liters x P38/liter = P50,666.66

Estimated for third year P65,398.3

TOTAL ESTIMATED EXPENSES FOR 3 YEARS = ranging from P186,886.07 to P189,286.07 (does not include full-service menu)

SPARK 1.0 — Year 1

Oil filter change P193 x 4 times = 772

Fuel filter P520 x 1=P520

Air filter (for aircon) P891 x 2 times = P1,782

Air filter (for engine) P405 x 1= P405

Spark plug P149 x 4 pc x 2 times = P1,192

Windshield wiper/driver P335 x 1 = P335

Windshield wiper/passenger P335 x 1 = P335

Mileage: at 15 km/liter: 20,000 km/15 km = 1,333.33 liters x P38/liter = P50,666.66

Total expenses for 1st year = P56,007.66

SPARK 1.0 — YEAR 2

Oil filter change P193 x 4 times = P772

Fuel filter P520 x 1 = P520

Air filter (for aircon) P891 x 2 times = P1,782

Air filter (for engine) P405 x 1 = P405

Spark plug P149 x 4 pc x 2 times = P1,192

Alternator belt P451 x 1= P451

Power steering belt P580 x 1 = P580

Windshield wiper/driver P335 x 1 = P335

Windshield wiper/passenger P335 x 1 = P335

Pad kit-front disc brake P2,062 x 1 = P2,062

Shoe and lining kit-rear P2,410 x 1 = P2,410

*Tires: P2,000 to P3,000 x 4 pc x 1 = ranging from P8,000 to P12,000

Mileage: at 15 km/liter: 20,000 km/15 km = 1,333.33 liters x P38/liter = P50,666.66

Total P69,510.66 to P73,510.66

SPARK 1.0 — YEAR 3

Oil filter change P193 x 4 times = P772

Fuel filter pump P520 x 1 = P520

Air filter (for aircon) P891 x 2 times = P1,782

Air filter (for engine) P405 x 1 = P405

Power steering belt P580 x 1 = P580

Spark plug P149 x 4 pc x 2 = P1,192

Windshield wiper/driver P335 x 1 = P335

Windshield wiper/passenger P335 x 1 = P335

Pad kit-front disc brake P2,062 x 1 = P2,062

Shoe and lining kit-rear brake P2,410 x 1 = P2,410

Shock absorbers/front and rear (P2,777 per piece x 2) P5,554 + (P1,672 per piece x 2) P3,344 x 1 = P8,898

Mileage at 15 km/liter: 20,000 km/15 km = 1,333.33 liters x P38/liter = P50,666.66

Total Expenses for 3rd year P69,957.66

TOTAL EXPENSES FOR THREE YEARS = P195,475.98 to P199,475.98

* Full service menu not included.

Verdict:

For the budget-conscious family man looking for space for the wife and three growing kids, the 1.1-liter Getz is ideal for its relative roominess. It is also the hands down choice for the mechanics because of its roomy engine space. Aside from the P468,000, the prospective buyer will have to cough up an estimated P186,000 to P189,000 more for three years of driving.

Our experience with these three cars is that the 1.1-liter Picanto's engine is more responsive than the Getz and Spark. So for those looking for a bit more oomph in this engine range, you might want to try the Picanto. It also has the biggest rear lights among the three. That's added points for safety and visibility, which is important for cars of this size. To add to the P470,000 you have to cough up to acquire a Picanto, be ready to spend another P189,000 to P191,000 in three years.

For those who seek a more European look, and don't have much garage space to spare, the Spark is the primary choice. The third brake light at the rear and the three-point seatbelt for three back passengers are obvious safety considerations, and the rear window wiper is a useful addition. But be ready to bleed another P195,000 to P199,000 more for three years.

The estimated three-year spending is relative and is based on current prices. One thing's sure as the sun rises the next day, your half million will just start your engines. For them to run and serve you without question, you will have to dig into your pockets some more. These cars may be cheap, but time isn't. Actually, it's priceless.

Ooops. Some mix up on the spec sheet of Hyundai Getz and Kia Picanto on our first series: Getz's power should've been 66 ps at 5,500 rpm and Picanto's power should've been 64 ps at 5,500 rpm. Sorry about that.

Acknowledgement: Thanks to the University of the Philippines mecheng "motorheads" and the Philippine Carpet Manufacturing Corp.'s Raffy Villareal and Arnold Nateñias.

KIA PICANTO 1.1 recommended schedule of replacement/estimates

Engine Oil Filter	Every 7,500 kms / 4 months
Fuel Filter	Every 60,000 kms / 3 yrs.
Air Filter (for aircon)	Every 7,500 kms / 4 months
Air Filter (for engine)	Every 15,000 kms / 8 months.
Spark Plug	Every 45,000 kms / 2 yrs.
V-Ribbed Belt	Every 20,000 kms / 1 yr
Belt"V"-Power Steering Pump	Every 20,000 ks / 1 yr
Blade-W/shld Wiper (Driver)	1 yr. / 20,000 kms
Blade-W/shld Wiper (Pass)	1 yr. / 20,000 kms
Pad Kit-fr Disc Brake	2 yrs. / 40,000 kms
Shoe & Lining Kit-RR Brake	3 yrs. / 60,000 kms
Tires	2 years
Shock Absorbers	2 years
FULL SERVICE MENU	Every 5,000 km with no major parts replacement P1800 to P5000; with parts replacement P8000; Major PMS will reach P10,000 with aircon system

*DOES NOT INCLUDE LABOR FEE

CHEVY SPARK 1.0 recommended schedule of replacement/estimates

Engine Oil Filter	four times a year or every 5,000 km
Fuel Filter	once a year
Air Filter (for aircon)	Twice a year
Air Filter (for engine)	once or twice a year or every 20,000 km
Spark Plug	two to three times a year or every 10,000 km
V-Ribbed Belt/Alternator Belt	Once a year or every 40,000 km
Power Steering Belt	Once a year or every 40,000 kms
Blade-W/Shld Wiper (Driver)	once a year
Blade-W/Shld Wiper (Pass)	once a year
Pad Kit-FR Disc Brake	Every 30,000 kms
Shoe & Lining Kit-RR Brake	Every 30,000 kms
Tires	estimate every two years
Shock Absorbers	estimate every 2 years
FULL SERVICE MENU	Every 5,000 km with no major parts replacement P3,000-4,000; Major PMS to reach P5,000-6,000

*DOES NOT INCLUDE LABOR FEE

GETZ 1.1 Recommended schedule of replacement/estimates

Filter Assy-Engine Oil	First 1,000km;first 5,000Km; every 5,000Km thereafter.
Filter-Fuel Pump	every 40,000Km.
Filter-Air Cleaner (for engines)	every 20,000Km; inspections every 5,000km.
Filter-Air (for aircon)	every 20K km; inspection every 5K, 15K ,25K, 35K, 45K, 55K, 65K, 75K kilometers;
Plug Assy-Spark	Every 10,000Km
V-Ribbed Belt	To last for 1 year or 20K km if properly maintained; or every PMS schedule.
Belt"V"-Power Steering Pump	To last for 1 year or 20K km if properly maintained; or every PMS schedule.
Blade-W/Shld Wiper (Driver)	once a year
Blade-W/Shld Wiper (Pass)	once a year
Pad Kit-FR Disc Brake	Lasts more than a year depending on driver's style; replaced twice as much as the brake shoes.
Shoe & Lining Kit-RR Brake	Recommended for replacement on the third year
Tires	every two years
Shock Absorbers	Guaranteed to last for 3 years or 100,000km for normal use.
Full Service Menu	regular 5,000km PMS intervals ranges between P2,100 to P5,300 depending on the grade and the brand of oil used. Major PMS intervals ranges between P6,000 to P11,500 depending on the grade of oil used.

*DOES NOT INCLUDE LABOR FEE

INFOGRAPHICS LOUIE BACANI

!!Double caution!! ... potholes

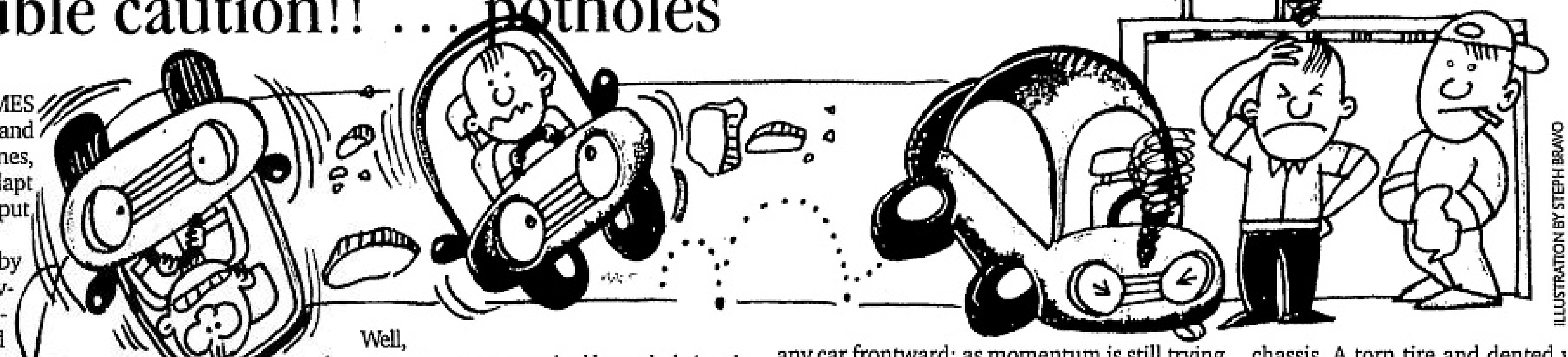
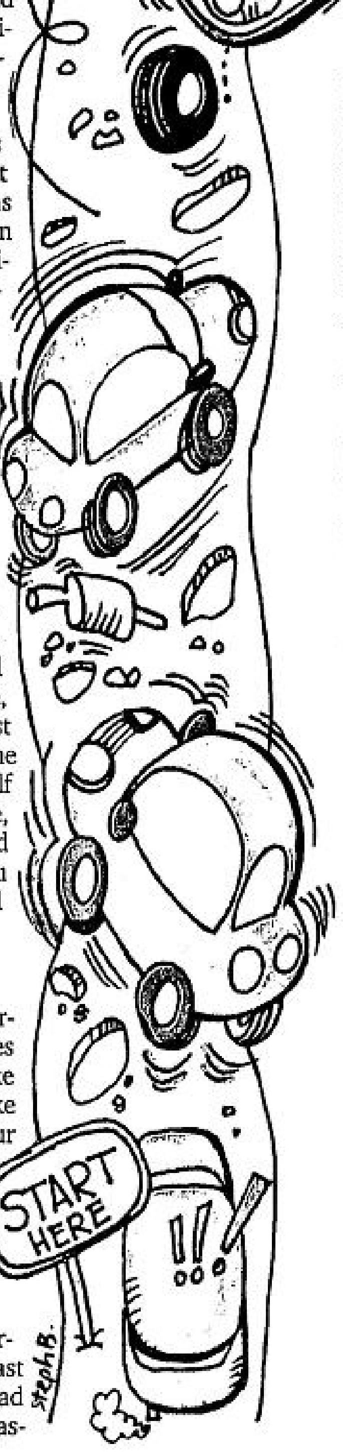


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO



IF THERE IS ONE THING GOOD THAT COMES out of driving in a country with as varied and challenging a road condition as the Philippines, it is that local drivers will have learned to adapt well to whatever the highways and byways put in their path.

Whether by years of experience or just by the sheer need to survive, the Filipino driver would have had to become rather proficient at craters that pose as potholes and supposedly paved, uneven surfaces that rival the worst pre-Renaissance cobblestone pave.

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

The trouble is that most of what we've learned as motorists is taken from direct experience, often something that already resulted in vehicle damage or a near accident situation at the very least. It is but logical that one will learn how to deal with an emergency once you've become a victim of a flat tire, suspension damage or a motor vehicle altercation.

Maybe, just maybe, these unfortunate situations can be avoided. All that is needed really is to anticipate what the road ahead will do to your car. Sounds simple, but this is another variable that one must seriously take into consideration when one takes the wheel. Look ahead. Give yourself enough time to react and if all is too late, well just pray for the best. Responsible and safe speeds are the best way to give you those precious moments to slow or, if at all possible, avoid certain disaster.

One guarantee on RP roads

Right after the seasonal rains, one guarantee on Philippine roads is that potholes will miraculously germinate just like mushrooms, just like moss, just like mosquitoes. Even the best sections of our road network are not spared from the spontaneous creation of cracks, crevices and craters. Very often too, one could have sworn that they'd pass that section of road the previous week or even earlier in the day and that gaping tear in the tarmac was not there. Surprise ambush by even the smallest, least menacing of these random rips in the road is a sure way to the nearest repair shop—assuming of course that you make it there.

Well, the moment you are surprised by pothole it only means one of two things. One, that you were not paying attention. You were possibly using your mobile phone. Or even worse you were daydreaming while operating a moving vehicle. Two, if you were at least half concentrated on the road ahead, the plain facts are that you were just traveling a little too fast for comfort. Whatever the reasons that your car's suspension, chassis, tires and wheels will have to endure punishment, more often that not, it is because of driver error.

A piece of advice

What to do then in this situation? A piece of advice: Do not panic brake. For the love of everything automotive, please do not stand on the brakes all the way through your inevitable moment of oneness with the pothole. In simple terms, ladies and gentlemen, if you are going to attempt to brake, be sure to let go of the brake pedal before you reach the lip of said pothole. Again, no brakes while your car is crashing into a pothole. Have I made myself clear enough?

Why so, many readers might ask? While attempting to ride out or float through a jagged gap in the road surface is not any assurance that your car will remain unscathed, braking through it will dramatically increase the odds of damage. Consider the following:

Braking dramatically shifts the balance of any car frontward; as momentum is still trying to carry the automobile's mass forward, the vehicle's center of gravity shifts. This results in a slight pivoting the chassis on the front axle. The harder the braking therefore, the more exaggerated a car's nosedive is. The more weight there is on the front tire, the greater the amount of impact force must be absorbed by the tire, the wheel, the suspension and the chassis. A torn tire and dented wheels are almost assured while a blown suspension and a twisted chassis are a very distinct possibility.

So in this time of potholes, I encourage readers to tread lightly on the roads. Remember that increased speeds also mean a direct proportion of increased concentration. Road hazards are often random, appearing without rhyme or reason; driving on the other hand is a deliberate act.

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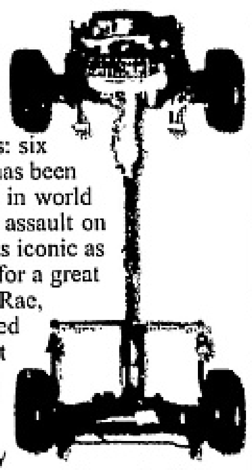

Impreza WRX - Subaru's Rally Icon Is Here

The story behind the Impreza's success is best told by the raw statistics: six World Rally Championship titles and 46 outright rally wins. The Impreza has been the defining car in Subaru's elevation from relative obscurity to a legend in world rallying. From its inception in 1993, the Impreza has provided a sensory assault on motorsport fans across the globe. Subaru's blue and yellow livery is now as iconic as the flat-four engine note which trumpets the car's continued success. And for a great car, there have been great drivers: Ari Vatanen, Kenneth Eriksson, Colin McRae, Carlos Sainz, Juha Kankkunen, Tommi Makinen and the sadly-missed Richard Burns have all succeeded with the car down the years. Most recently, Petter Solberg has made the Impreza his own, demonstrating its undiminished appetite for glory when he won the 2003 Drivers' World Rally Championship title.

The new Impreza WRX shares the same genetic code and core technology with Subaru's WRC cars. The passion, potential and strength that the Subaru engineers built into them have influenced as well all the other Subaru models - the Outback, the Legacy and the Forester. What it takes to win on the toughest rally stages translates into cars in which the drivers can safely enjoy the sensation of motor sports and supreme driving pleasure.

Subaru has been on a single-minded mission to think differently about car design for more than three decades. It has perfected the combination of Boxer Engines and the totally linear drivetrain layout of the Symmetrical AWD, while the other cars trod more traditional drivetrains such front or rear wheel drives. The two complementary concepts produce superior driving potential that only Subaru has exploited which is most evident in the Impreza WRX. Everything from engine to transmission, transfer to propeller shaft and rear differential is logically arranged in line. All the resulting benefits work together, giving the Impreza naturally neutral balance and poise.

The Impreza WRX encapsulates the Subaru brand promise, innovative, individual, courageous car design turned into useable reality with the added attraction of multi-purpose practicality. It's a unique combination, aimed at car drivers who want hard, safe driving on all the world's different roads. Subarus are machines that are thoroughly at home in the city, yet built to tame the wildest extremes of nature.

ADVT.

FORESTER
Because the road ahead is paved with rocks.

The new Subaru Forester 2.5XT. Carries a horizontally-opposed, naturally-aspirated, free-revving DOHC Boxer engine with an excellent pick-up response yet lower center of gravity. With full-time All-Wheel-Drive to constantly monitor traction. And heavy-duty independent suspension for precise handling and a smooth drive. Engineered with Subaru's All Wheel Driving System and everything about active safety, the equally loaded Forester 2.0X also boasts of a smooth, light drive that perfectly complements its aggressive character. Making sure that every Forester is enough for you to reach the top, alive.

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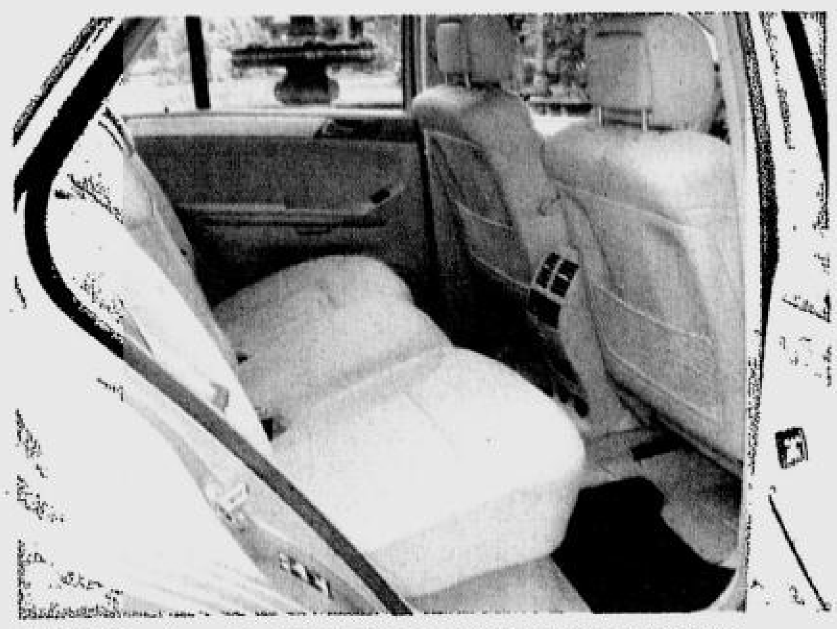


LEATHER seats and individual aircon controls for rear passengers.

PHOTOS BY AIDA SEVILLA MENDOZA

UNMISTAKABLY a Mercedes-Benz: the ML 350

M-Class

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

THE 2006 MERCEDES-BENZ ML 350 won the Ultra-Luxury SUV of the Year trophy in the 2005 Car of the Year-Philippines (COTY-P), having been released on the market in late 2005. Also known as the M-Class, this medium-sized premium sport utility vehicle may be familiar to movie goers who saw "Jurassic Park" many, many moons ago wherein the original model was shown.

Now comes the 2006 generation M-Class in two versions: the 350 and the 500, both of which seat five. At present, only the 3.5-liter, V6 DOHC ML 350 is available, but Mercedes-Benz distributor CATS Motors Inc. may offer the 5.0-liter, V8 ML 500 sometime soon.

At P5.5 million, the ML 350 is in the same price range as the BMW X5 and costs less than the Range Rover but more than the Volvo XC90 T6 Dual Turbo and the Volkswagen Touareg. Aside from price, what makes the ML 350 different from other five-seater luxury SUVs?

The star

For starters, the Mercedes-Benz emblem. Among all the prestigious car brands, the Mercedes three-point star is still the most instantly recognized in this country as the "Chedeng" was the first luxury car sold here in the post-World War II years. Since the Mercedes star is prominently placed at the center of the M-Class' front grille, expect gates to swing open and admiring if not envious glances to come your way when you drive it.

There is much to admire. The ML 350's unibody structure on a broad wheelbase and 17-inch alloy wheels looks impressively muscular and robust, but not overly aggressive or intimidating. Inside, aluminum, chrome inlay, top-grade leather and wood trim plus Thermatic automatic climate control combine to create a roomy, comfy and elegant cabin worthy of the Mercedes marque.

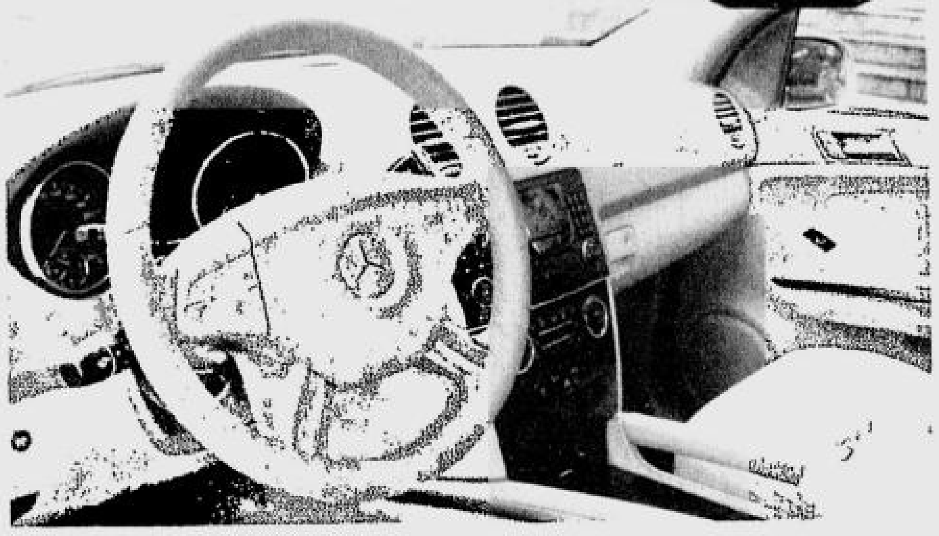
Another thing that differentiates the ML 350 from the competition is that the gearshift lever is mounted on the steering column instead of the center console. However, for some of us the column shifter requires a little time to get used to.

Multifunction

The multifunction steering wheel allows the driver to operate the radio, call up data and manually change gears using the gearshift buttons. Again, mastering the wheel-mounted controls requires a bit of a learning curve. But once you get the hang of the Direct Select gearshift buttons, you can fully enjoy the ML 350's 7G-Tronic, the world's first seven-speed automatic transmission which skips a gear or two if you want to brake hard or speed up pronto. The 7G-Tronic is the third feature that sets the M-Class apart from its rivals in the luxury SUV market.

The ML 350's engine produces 272 peak horsepower at 6,000 rpm and max torque of 350 Nm/2,400–5,000 rpm. Those figures look plenty adequate on paper until you take into account the ML 350's 2,135 kg curb weight and you begin to wonder whether the ML 500's 306 bhp and 460 Nm max torque would be more up your speed ... until you also take into account the likelihood that the ML 500 would cost millions of pesos more (assuming that you can afford the M-Class.)

As it is, the ML 350's two tons sort of disallow truly sporty acceleration although DaimlerChrysler claims that it can sprint from zero to 100 kph in 8.4 seconds. One thing is sure: on paved roads, the ML 350 delivers excellent, carlike ride quality and comfort due to its new suspension, wider track and improved axle setup.



INSIDE, elegance befitting the Mercedes marque.

Off tarmac

Although the ML 350 was primarily designed for driving on tarmac and does not have low-range reduction gearing, it can do a bit of off-roading due to its permanent AWD (all-wheel-drive) system and ESP/4ETS (electronic stability program/electronic traction system) that incorporates ABS with brake assist and acceleration skid control, supported by hill start aid and DSR (downhill speed regulation). In addition, the M-Class easily fords water up to 400 millimeters deep.

Aside from ABS, four-wheel disc brakes and the unitized body, first-class safety is provided by two-stage dual air bags up front, side bags for driver and front passenger, window bags for driver, front passenger and rear passengers, five head restraints, belt tensioners, belt force limiters, roll-over sensor, tire pressure loss warning system, third brake light with LEDs, front and rear fog lights, keyless entry and theft-deterrent system. In the frontal and side crash tests of the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the M-Class was awarded the maximum five-star rating.

Bottom line, it looks like the ML 350 is worth its stratospheric price tag—if you have the cash.

* * *

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Toyota launches all-new 2006 Camry premium luxury sedan

TOYOTA MOTOR PHILIPPINES CORP. introduced to the media the other day the all-new 2006 Toyota Camry. Toyota's flagship model has been completely redesigned to elevate its position from the sophisticated medium-size passenger car to a premium luxury sedan.

The 2006 Toyota Camry features class-leading technology such as 3.5-liter dual VVT-i engine, cruise control, push start and smart entry system, plus an abundance of state-of-the-art luxurious features and styling both in the interior and exterior.

Camry worldwide

The first Camry debuted in 1980 better known as the rear-wheel-drive sedan, Toyota Celica Camry. Two years after its introduction, it was positioned as a global vehicle as exports of the luxurious front-wheel-drive sedan started. The Camry status as a global model has since been thoroughly established.

At present, it is being produced in eight countries including Japan, and is being sold in more than 100 countries and regions. With this sales growth over the years, the Camry has achieved cumulative global sales of more than 10 million units. It continues to be Toyota's flagship model in Asia.

Camry in RP

In the Philippines, the Camry product history started 10 years ago when it was officially introduced in 1996 and was positioned in the mid-size PC segment. It started getting the spotlight for market leadership when the next generation version was launched in 2002.

It made its way up with highest sales recorded in 2004 with almost 1,300 units. With a long product history, a reliable manufacturer and a reputation of being the No. 1 sedan choice for the country's leaders, the Camry continued to lead the way.

Vibrant clarity

Based on the Toyota brand design philosophy of "Vibrant Clarity," the new Camry balances a sense of energy that speaks of its powerful driving performance and a refreshing interior space that evokes a sense of invigorating openness.

By adopting a package that expands the wheelbase and front and rear tracks, the Camry boasts an exterior appearance that expresses strength and stability, as well as a roomy and comfortable interior with extensive flat-surfaced legroom for the rear seat and ample cargo space. The Camry has an overall dimension of 4,825 mm, 1,820 mm and 1,470 mm in length, width and height.

Beyond prestige cars' standard

The new Camry adopts a light-weight, high-rigidity body that seeks both a quiet cabin and superior aerodynamic properties, recording a coefficient drag of 0.29. It features a high technology 2GR-FE 3.5-liter V-type, 6-cylinder, DOHC, 24-valve dual VVT-i engine which provides maximum output of 277 ps/6,200 rpm, and maximum torque of 346 Nm/4,700 rpm. With the newly developed V6 3.5-liter engine and its advanced technology features, the Camry goes beyond the standard of prestige cars.

The chassis system is highlighted by the 6-speed sequential automatic transmission for top-of-the-line variant, and 5-speed sequential automatic for the 2.4-liter V and G variants. This transmission technology lets ample power pass more efficiently to the wheels, while the sequential shift lever lets the driver enjoy manual transmission-like aggressiveness and sporty drive.

The most suitable gear is selected according to the driving condition, resulting to a pleasant driving experience. It also fitted with a 16-inch front disc brakes, and 15-inch disc for the rear, providing better stopping power. A 215/55R 17-inch alloy wheels are standard for the Q variant.

Passing highest standards

The 2006 Camry passes the highest standards for global quality with its active and passive safety features to cope with different driving situations. It features ABS and Brake Assist System, coupled with new Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) technology. The VSC detects tire slippage and automatically helps stabilize the car when driving on slippery roads.

Adaptive Front Lighting System (AFS) enhances nighttime visibility by automatically regulating the headlamp beam pattern in response to steering input and driving conditions. Driver and passenger SRS Airbags are offered across all variants, with the addition of side airbags for the top-of-the-line 3.5Q model.

High-tech hospitality

The Camry's new features are characterized by high-tech hospitality, engineered for the discerning taste of its target market, the new breed of leaders. Exterior developments include HID with AFS headlamps, combined with the automatic-dynamic headlamp leveling device and auto light control system. This auto-leveling device fixes the illumination axis in accordance with the forward and backward tilt of the car while in motion.

Electric retractable outer mirrors are hydrophilic, incorporated with wide view and reverse link features, and is integrated with side turn signal lamps. Upon shifting into reverse, the mirror would show the rear tire area to facilitate safer backing up.

The Camry's high-tech hospitality continues in the luxurious interior equipped with high-end features that will surely give the driver and its passengers a royal treatment.

Beginning with the driver's seat, the steering wheel is made of leather with wood grain material, and incorporates manual tilt and telescopic system. Giving the driver the full control, the steering wheel also incorporates audio, air condition and multiinformation display (MID) buttons. Information such as odometer/trip meter, outside temperature, average speed, cruising range, average fuel consumption and elapsed time are instantly displayed.

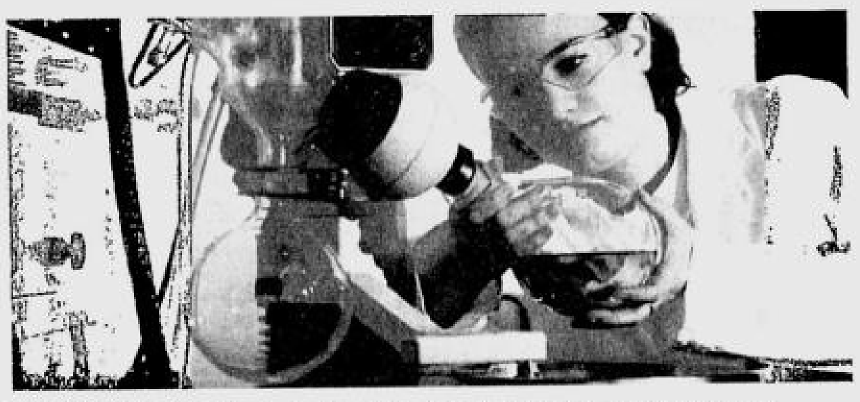
2006 CAMRY

Henkel innovation supports development of race car

TAKING CURVES AT SPEEDS OF around 200 kilometers per hour (kph), Formula One drivers vie for positions in the heated and fast-changing Mobil 1 German Grand Prix. It is a race that can bring the unexpected at every turn, keeping fans on the edges of their seats. But for the engineers who design Formula One cars, such unpredictability is truly unbearable. They need to know exactly how a car's individual components will hold up under certain high temperatures and what to expect when parts are subjected to immense levels of strain and vibration.

"You can never know what events are going to arise on the track, but for all the factors you can directly influence, you need to achieve the utmost in predictability and reliability," said Martin Whitmarsh, CEO, Formula 1, Team McLaren Mercedes. "The close collaboration and technology transfer with partners such as Henkel help us implement the small modifications on the car that can make the difference on race day."

As an official supplier to Team McLaren Mercedes, Henkel works closely with the team in a continual transfer of innovation and insight toward achieving the best possible performance and process efficiency in nearly 200 applications of Henkel products and technologies on the MP4-21. Many of these applications are securing bolted connections with a broad range of Loctite brand adhesives, each with different chemistries and properties to cover a diversity of constraints. Typically, the higher the strength of the threadlocker, the greater is its resistance to withstand extreme forces, such as the heavy shocks, constant vibration and high temperatures to which Formula One car components are subjected. Among various grades of high-, medium- and low-strength adhesives, the specific Loctite product to be used for each application is cited in the assembly specifications of the car.



TECHNICIANS at Henkel's labs in England carry out more than 5,000 specific tests to produce new data on a range of Loctite adhesives.

Innovation drives quick change

Such meticulous information may seem minor, but it pays off not only in reliability but also efficiency in assembling a car that undergoes continual component modifications and replacements. For the 2006 season, Team McLaren Mercedes completely redesigned 90 percent of its car's components. And the change does not stop there: During the course of any given race season, engineers may redesign and change out as much as 75 percent of the car's components.

A new development at Henkel is helping the team solve a long-standing assembly challenge: Securing components with an adhesive that is strong enough to withstand extreme conditions yet still allows for easy disassembly and reuse of components. Henkel's US-based R & D team created an optimal solution by enhancing the medium-strength threadlocker range with Loctite 246—a product that exhibits superior resistance to high temperatures despite its medium-grade strength. McLaren Racing engineers are testing the product in applications on removable parts such as the driveshaft, brake-pad abutment screws and suspension. The advantage is that engineers can replace parts easily using standard hand tools during a race weekend or at test sessions—without having to scrap the parts after removal and with the assurance that the replacements will hold fast for the duration of the race.

Envirofit's emission-reducing solution for 2-stroke motorbikes named top 10 innovative tech

NONPROFIT ENVIROFIT INTERNATIONAL Ltd., whose innovative technology could help solve the alarming increase in air pollution in the Philippines and the rest of Asia, was named to the list of 10 Most Innovative Technology Companies that Create Global Social Change by the prestigious Stanford Social Innovation Review.

Envirofit International was recognized for its retrofit technology—a bolt-on, direct-injection kit for carbureted two-stroke engines—which drastically reduces pollution to within acceptable environmental standards while improving fuel economy by more than 35 percent. The retrofit kit easily pays for itself in less than one year from reduced operating expenses while also improving health and social conditions. According to a recent Envirofit study, tricycle drivers enjoy an average savings of P70 per day due to less fuel and 2T oil consumption, which translates to an annual savings of approximately P20,000.

Preliminary consultations

Late last year, Envirofit began preliminary consultations to retrofit 3,000 two-stroke tricycle engines in Vigan, a Unesco World Heritage City, in Ilocos Sur. The city government has recently passed an ordinance requiring all two-stroke tricycles to either be decommissioned and replaced by four-stroke models, or to undergo direct-injection retrofitting similar to that offered by Envirofit.

Vigan Mayor Ferdinand C. Medina was happy to note that Vigan is among the first to be "retrofitted" by Envirofit. "The Vigan Tricycle Retrofit program will be a great help in preserving the heritage of Vigan," Medina said.

"Progress is inevitable, but pollution shouldn't be. With this program, we look forward to dramatically improving the air quality in Vigan," Medina added. The Vigan Tricycle Retrofit program has generated intense interest from city governments throughout the country. Envirofit is considering several other retrofit projects in the Philippines for implementation in the near future.

Harmful smoke

A recent study revealed that there are over 1.3 million tricycles in the country today, powered by two-stroke cycle engines that emit harmful smoke. A World Bank study further estimated that within the Philippines' four largest cities alone, particulate emissions result in more than 2,000 premature deaths, 9,000 cases of severe respiratory illnesses and a large amount of associated economic losses each year.

Envirofit presents a solution to these concerns through its retrofit technology. The technology was recently endorsed by the Clean Air Initiatives for Asian Cities (CAI-Asia), a program developed by the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank.

Major solution

Envirofit works with businesses, NGOs and governments to get its technology in the hands of those who need it most. It has an opportunity to provide a major solution to one of the country's perennial environmental problems—pollution—as well as a welcome boost to economic, health and social conditions. Envirofit plans to extend its technology to the rest of Asia, where there are an estimated 100 million two-stroke engines producing the emissions equivalent of 5 billion cars.

Envirofit Philippines Inc. is a Philippine tax-exempt, nonprofit corporation formed in 2006. Envirofit develops and commercializes technologies that reduce pollution or enhance energy efficiency in the Philippines, with a particular focus promoting environmental benefits, improving public health, fostering economic growth, and alleviating poverty. The company is currently focused on commercializing clean, direct-injection two-stroke engine retrofit technology.

24-hour road assistance with BPI Family Drive Your Dream auto loan

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The Emergency Car Care Package gives you vehicle assistance like towing in the event of a breakdown of up to P4,000 worth of service. It can even provide you with minor on-site repairs like battery boosting, jumpstart, tire changing, delivery of gasoline, and car lockout. If you need your car to be removed using a crane, you can enjoy up to P8,000 worth of service.

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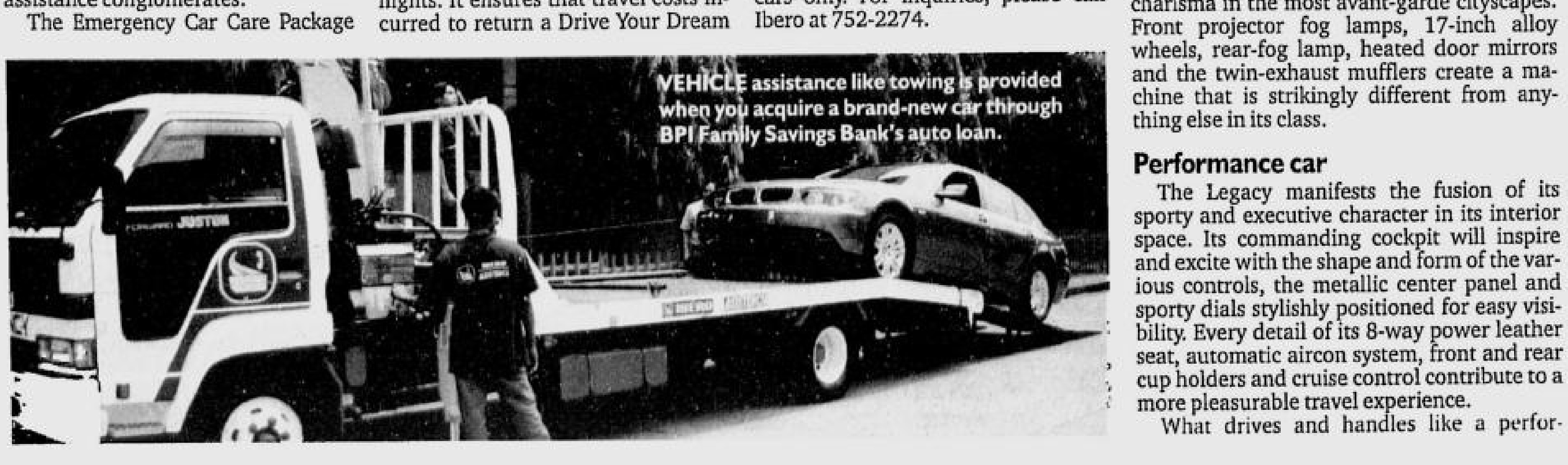
The Emergency Car Care Package also includes personal assistance. If you are stranded and couldn't have your car repaired within 48 hours, you can book at the nearest hotel and your Emergency Car Care Package will take care of up to P1,000 hotel expenses for a maximum of two nights. It ensures that travel costs incurred to return a Drive Your Dream Auto Loan member to the usual place of residence are shouldered if the vehicle cannot be repaired within 48 hours.

Information

You can get information like addresses and telephone numbers of hospitals within the geographical limits as well as contact details of accredited repair shops. If there's an urgent message that you want to be relayed, you can ask that transmission of such messages can be done in your behalf when a breakdown or accident occurs.

This free roadside assistance service is co-terminus with the loan term and coverage is limited to brand-new cars only. For inquiries, please call Ibero at 752-2274.



VEHICLE assistance like towing is provided when you acquire a brand-new car through BPI Family Savings Bank's auto loan.

The Subaru Legacy . . .

From page B2-2

gracious styling. Its wide-bodied, purposeful stance creates a real dynamic presence and charisma in the most avant-garde cityscapes. Front projector fog lamps, 17-inch alloy wheels, rear-fog lamp, heated door mirrors and the twin-exhaust mufflers create a machine that is strikingly different from anything else in its class.

Performance car

The Legacy manifests the fusion of its sporty and executive character in its interior space. Its commanding cockpit will inspire and excite with the shape and form of the various controls, the metallic center panel and sporty dials stylishly positioned for easy visibility. Every detail of its 8-way power leather seat, automatic aircon system, front and rear cup holders and cruise control contribute to a more pleasurable travel experience.

What drives and handles like a performance car should also stop like one. That's why the Legacy is equipped with a powerful and reliable ABS braking system that lets the driver brake hard and steer away from hazards at the same time. The Vehicle Dynamics Control System redistributes torque automatically, while adjusting braking power and throttle in an instant, balancing everything so the driver can steer away out of potentially dangerous situations. Complementing the active safety features of the Legacy are its equally impressive passive safety items—SRS front airbags, dual front side and curtain airbags and active headrests.

There's no mistaking the urbane ease the Legacy exudes. Its pioneering fusion of sweeping lines, stimulating performance and intelligent technology demonstrates the unique way Subaru builds cars. This is Subaru's progressive thinking at its purest—delivering the unique sensation of sporty driving in an executive environment that comfortably leaves conventional vehicles behind.

A car that is practical for daily use

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

FEW can top the 2006 Toyota Corolla Altis when it comes to practicality, value and refinement.

FOR THOSE WHO WANT A BIT more "oomph" than what Toyota's entry-level sedan—that's the Vios—could offer, there's always the Corolla Altis.

Positioned in between the Vios and the more luxurious, powerful and expensive Camry, the mid-size Altis enjoys that most enticing of mixes, that of clean and simple design inside and out, the right amount of power (a choice of 1.6-liter engine and 1.8-liter engine) and a competitive price range that won't shoot down one's budget—from the basic P723,000 to the top-of-the-line P990,000 variant.

The latest Altis is a pretty straightforward car and when it comes to practicality, value and refinement, few sedans can top it.

Confidence

Moreover, the name itself brings confidence to a car buyer. The Altis was first introduced in the Philippine market in July 2001 and has since remained strong as evidenced in its continuously increasing market share.

Toyota designed the latest Altis to give the car a smooth and quiet ride that makes daily commutes a painless chore.

Although it may not be a car that one would bring to a race course, the latest Altis has got the features, both in terms of safety and luxury, to attract a good number of car buyers looking for a car that is practical for daily use.

The 145-horsepower Variable Valve Timing-intelligent (VVT-i) engine is quiet, smooth and refined and is nicely matched to the electronically controlled four-speed automatic transmission.

It includes a shift logic system that helps hold a gear longer than it might otherwise if it senses the car is going up an incline or the driver wants plenty of power while passing.

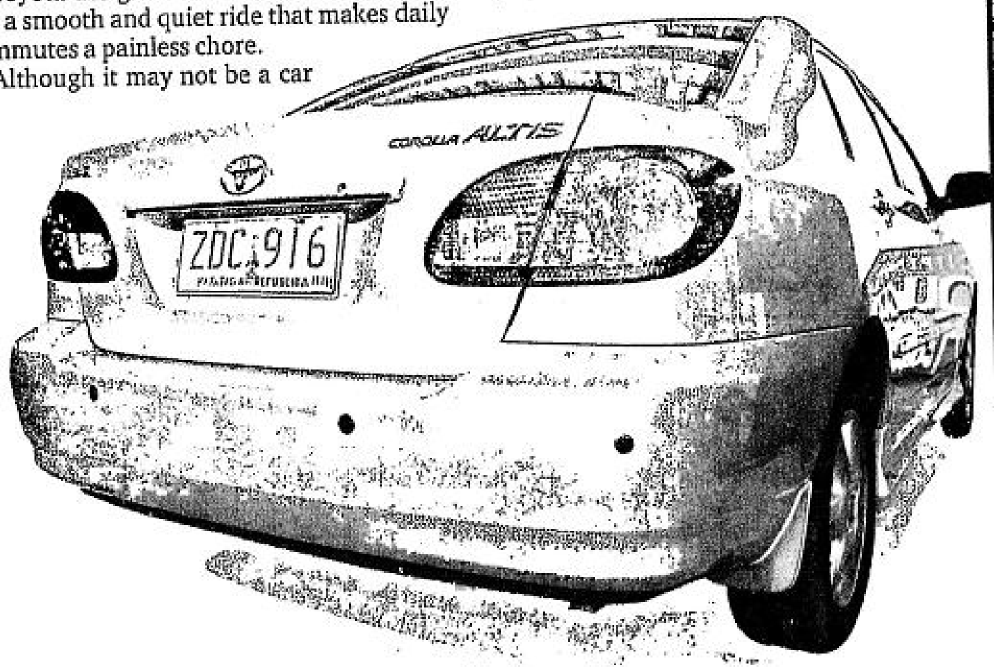
Smooth ride

The 2006 Altis' suspension has been tuned to give a smooth ride and combined with a relatively long wheelbase, it does a good job of soaking up bumps and road vibration, giving the car a nice, smooth ride that we really liked.

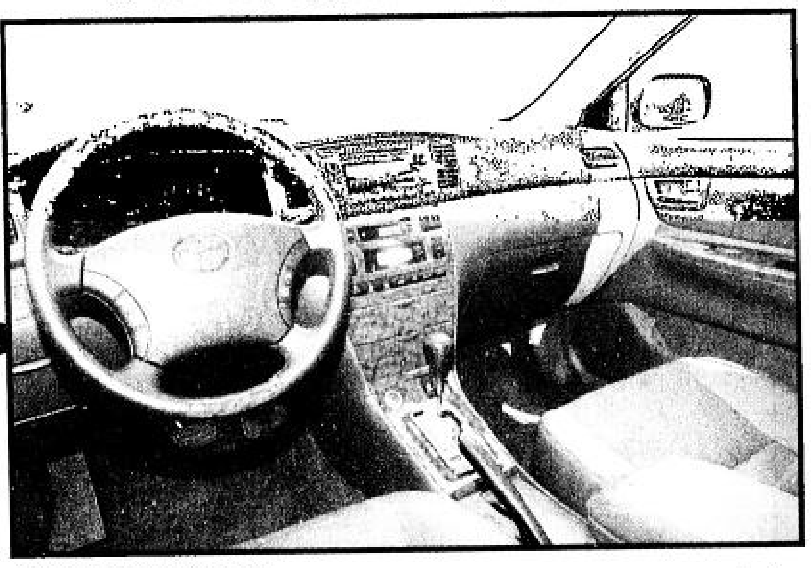
Also new to the model is its high-intensity discharge (HiD) headlamps that have been adopted for clearer lighting, and for added safety, it has a manual leveling system that provides suitable lighting at a better angle.

One only has to sit behind the wheel of the latest Altis to appreciate the sense of quality that the car's interior convey. From its leather seats, high-grade plastics and instrumentation to the now darker wood-like trims, the car exudes luxury that is almost approximate that of its more expensive sedan sibling, the Camry.

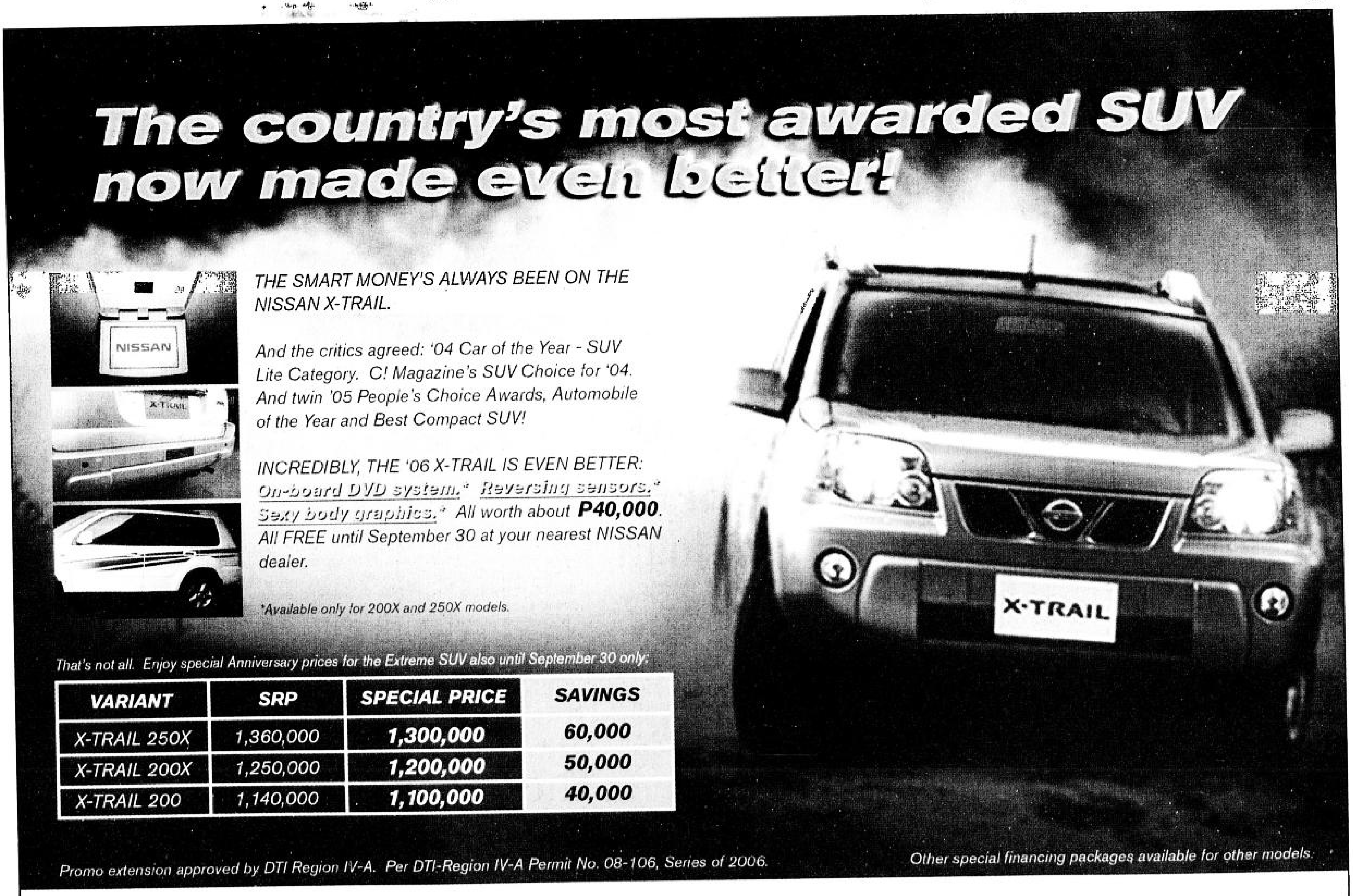
Indeed, the latest Altis is an outstanding mid-size sedan, and with 40 years of success and more than 30 million satisfied customers, the 2006 Altis will continue in firming its position as one of the best-selling passenger cars in the market today.



THE COROLLA Altis was first introduced in the Philippines in July 2001 and has since become a strong player in the sedan market.



FROM LEATHER seats, high-grade plastics and instrumentation to the now darker wood-like trims, the latest Altis exudes a feeling of luxury.



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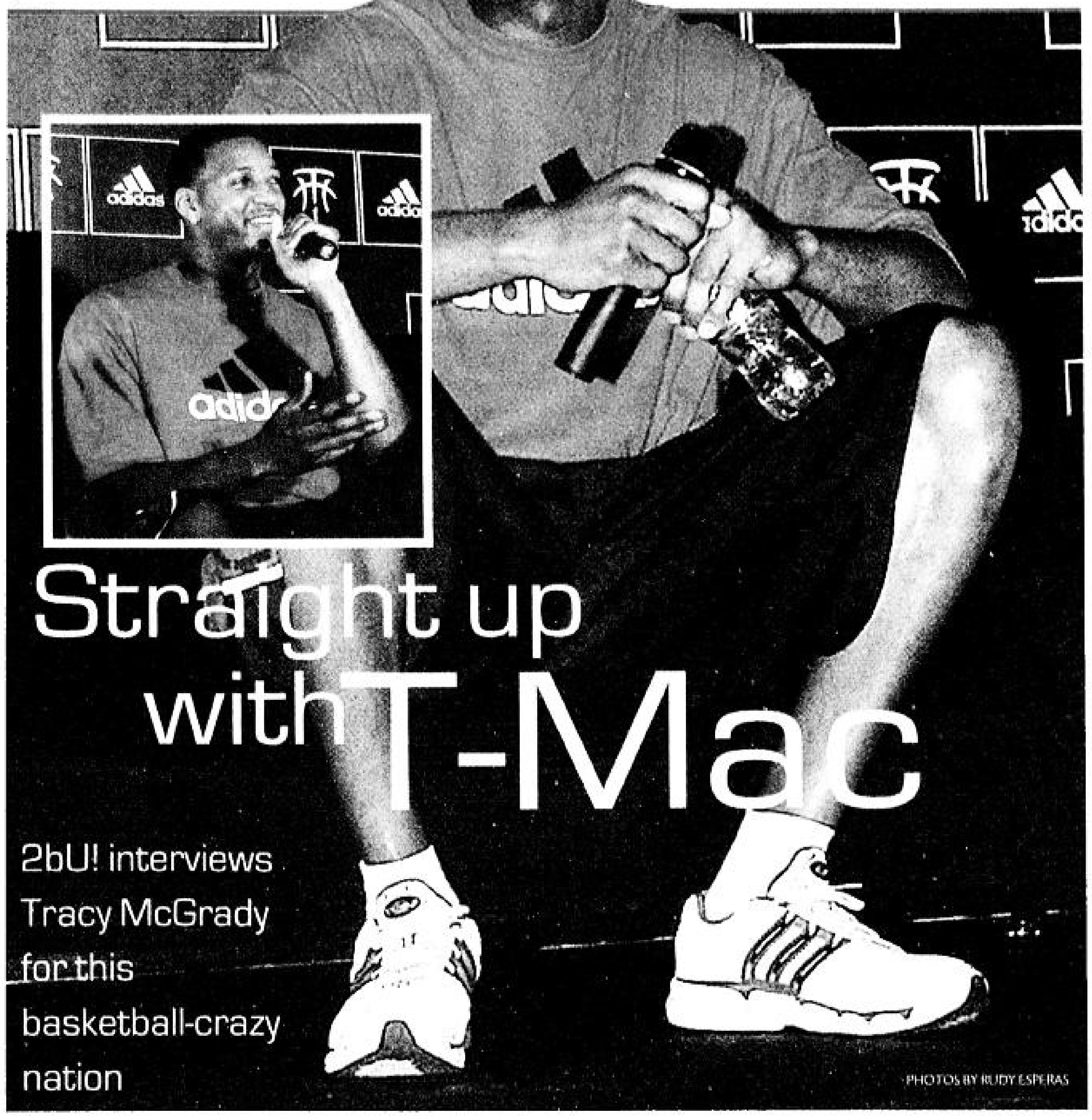

Straight up with T-Mac

2bU! interviews Tracy McGrady for this basketball-crazy nation

PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS

By Gabriel H. Mercado
2bU! Contributor

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE LOTS OF TRACY McGrady highlights. The most memorable one for me is when he was still with Orlando Magic in the 2002-2003 season, and the Magics were visiting the New York Knicks. It happened to be Patrick Ewing's retirement night, and major NBA stars like Michael Jordan, Charles Barkley and Julius Erving had come to honor Ewing as he retired his jersey.

At the sidelines, Jordan and Ewing were being interviewed when someone came up from behind the camera to shake their hands. It was McGrady, only 23 at that time. Both Jordan and Ewing were joking around with the interviewer when they stopped, acknowledged McGrady's presence, even slapping high fives with him.

The moment was only fleeting, but significant for three reasons. First, any one of the 10 players on the court could have done the same, but it was McGrady who took the time to do so. Second, it was a special night. The air was electric with many of the greatest players of the NBA under one roof to honor Ewing. And third, McGrady was paying his respects to the greatest players; he himself was slowly moving into their company.

The T-Mac was more than just another spectacular athlete. He had earned the respect not only of his peers, but of the established greats of the game. He had truly arrived.

Proving it

Since then, McGrady has fulfilled his promise. He became the NBA's Scoring Champ in '02-'03, and the youngest to average 30 points per game since the '70s. Last June he was chosen by EASports, makers of the famous NBA Live video game, to grace their cover for 2007. This is a great honor among most professional athletes, with some considering it almost as valuable as an MVP award.

Twice named to the All NBA First Team in '01-'02 and '02-'03 seasons, he is a five-time NBA All Star, and has patented a famous move where he bounces the ball off

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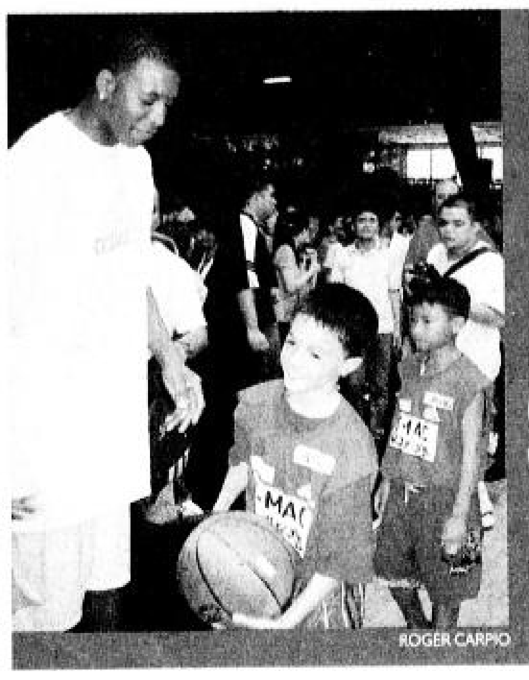
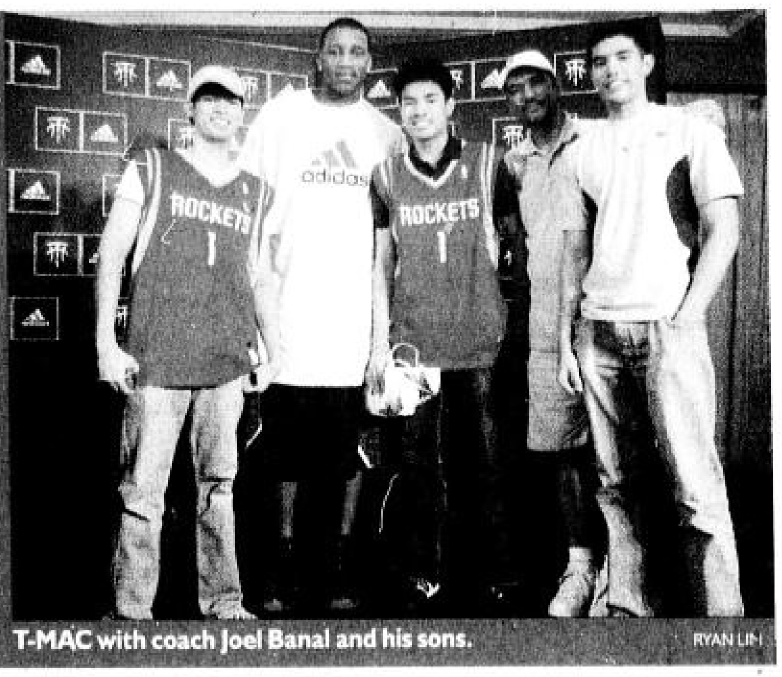


ROGER CARPIO

ROGER CARPIO

RUDY ESPERAS

SCENES from T-Mac's Manila visit



T-MAC with coach Joel Banal and his sons. RYAN LIM

Straight up with T-Mac

RYAN LIM

From page C1

the backboard as if to pass, but instead catches it for a thunderous dunk, making even fellow All-Stars jaws drop.

More recently he pulled off an amazing feat, scoring 13 points in 35 seconds against the San Antonio Spurs. Mostly using three-pointers and even a rare four-point play off a foul—from fellow All Star Tim Duncan, of all people.

Recently he was in Manila, the third leg of a four-country whirlwind tour for Adidas, to promote his new, individually numbered all-white Limited-Edition T-Mac Ones, of which there are only 1,650 pairs available. He is the first athlete to sign a lifetime contract with Adidas.

In this interview, the friendly and animated T-Mac talked with me and top coach Joel Banal, who brought along three of his four sons—Juan (21), Miguel (20) and Gabriel (16)—who were visibly excited about meeting the NBA player.

Coach Banal (CB): You have said "Impossible is Nothing," and I know you're gonna win an NBA championship, I'd like to know how soon?

Tracy McGrady (TM): Well, you're a coach, you know how hard it is. Well, you win a lot, so I don't know. (Laughs).

No, I'm sure you know how hard it is to win in the NBA. It's really hard, you've got some great teams. Some teams just do a great job of putting the pieces together to create that chemistry. I think with me and Yao, those are the two most important pieces that you need. We have an inside/outside game. We just need to get that, you know, that other piece that can really get us over the hump. I think with the addition of Shane Battier [guard, Houston], to our team, he's a very smart, very blue-collar basketball player, he'll help us be more successful than we were, but I still think we have to do a little more in terms of depth. You look at teams like Dallas, they have Jerry Stackhouse coming off their bench. San Antonio Spurs are deep all around (the Banal boys chime in: "Michael Finley!"), yeah they have Michael Finley coming off their bench. So it is really tough to win in the NBA I must tell you, it is.

CB: I don't know how they do it in the NBA but my style is I talk to my players, especially the big ones and I ask them what they think about the team. Do you do that?

Yeah we do that of course. I think its important that the coach talks to the best players to see, you know, what can we do to make our team better. I think it's important that you have a great relationship between the coach and the best player. You know the coach and best player usually have some run-ins. You're both competitors, you both wanna win. But its all about getting on the same page and making your team better.

CB: In connection with that, if you were asked, what do you think would you need to get closer to a championship?

It is important that you reach out to your best player and let him have some sort of opinion on where the team's future should be. Who is out there that I think can make our team better. That happens in the NBA, it really does. I know it happened with the Rockets when they asked me, because I have a great feel of talent. I recognize talent whenever I see it and they know that.

CB's boys: At home we always watch this clip of you against the San Antonio Spurs, where you made 13 points in less than a minute.

I watch that all the time! (Laughter.)

CB's boys: We watch it over and over again and there was this one player who was just stunned, after the game!

Seriously I honestly watch that play over and over 'cause it was a really a moment... after I hit two of those threes, I knew we were pretty much gonna win the game. You know after I hit that four-point play on Tim Duncan (Laughter), it was over. Our confidence was sky-high. It was like, we are gonna do this! So we just had to find some way to strategize to foul those guys without a lot of time coming off the clock, put them on the free-throw line, and I was just throwing up three's.

And it was crazy, I thought that after I hit my third three, I think we were up two. They inbound the ball, and the guy [Devin Brown] lost it. Nobody touched him. It was like... that was really meant for us to win that game. Nobody touched this guy. He fell down, loses the ball and who the ball comes to? Me! So I was thinking, I'm not gonna shoot a two, we've come this far, I did all this work, dammit we gonna win this game. That was my whole thing, we were gonna win this game. I put up a three and it went through the net, and it was crazy. It erupted in there. It was definitely a great feeling, guys.

CB boys: I think the best shot was when Tim Duncan fouled you. That was it.

You know what, Tim's seven-foot tall and I can't believe I got that shot up over him and made it. That was crazy. He was trying to avoid me, but all he had to do was just block the shot. He was right there 'cause I didn't really get off the ground that far, so he could've blocked the shot.

CB: After you made a couple I think they felt the pressure that they might lose the game.

Yeah they were missing free throws, and I just seen it on their faces. And I tell you, our arena, there was so much energy in that building, and.. a lot of people had left.

Gabby Mercado (GM): Yeah. How do you feel about something like that? Whenever that happens.

I told them, I looked at the camera and said you just missed a hell of a game.

GM: So when you're playing, how do you feel when you see the people filing out?

You know what? They paid good money, they came to see a good game, and when they feel the game is pretty much out of reach they leave. It really doesn't bother me. But that night? I'm sure it bothered them. (Laughter)

CB: How often do you feel like you own the game?

You know, I pick and choose. I like to see who's rolling on my team. So what I do know, because I play with Yao, I like to get Yao going first cause I know I could get myself going at any time. So I like to get Yao going, and if I see him struggling then I like to take over. Sometimes I have shots, but I like to get my other guys involved because it's tough when you have somebody demanding the ball all the time and you don't really get that feel for the ball and when you shoot the ball, it kinda feels weird.

So I like to move the ball around, get them confident, and when it's my time, I take it over. Now with the Rockets, I don't look to score 62 points [a record he set in Orlando]. I don't have to do that now. I just control the game, try to get us a win.

On Yao Ming and baseball

CB: When you were growing up, did you have a hero in the NBA?

Yeah I loved Magic Johnson.

CB: In your career, when did you feel that you had established yourself?

After my second year in Orlando, I really emerged being a superstar in this league. Before the 13 at 35, I was most famous for putting the ball off the glass in the All Star game and that really put me on a pedestal.

CB boys: How's your relationship with Yao? Is there a language barrier?

Yao speaks good English! Yao is a funny, goofy guy. He's real down to earth. I talk to him every now and then, check up on him make sure he's doing ok, and we have a great relationship.

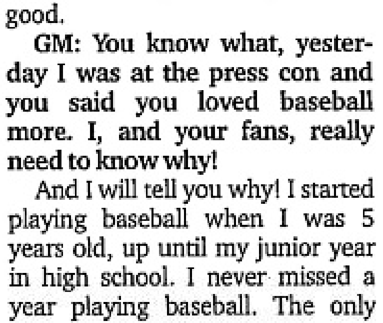
CB boys: What makes a good basketball player?

First, you have to respect the game. You have to love the game. You just have to have that passion for the game. You have to work hard. You can't work hard, think you are good, and stop working hard. You have to constantly just never be satisfied, and believe in yourself that you can be great. So every time I step on the court, it's not an arrogant thing, it's a confident thing. Every time I step on the court, I feel that I'm the best. I feel that nobody is better than me.

Other people might have their opinion, and I'm sure other guys feel the same way I do every time they step on the court but you just gotta take that with you. If you don't take that with you, I say to myself, [and I know] Kobe does too, if you don't think you're confident enough to play against us we gonna kill you. We gonna take you hard, and once we take you hard, you're done. 'Cause your confidence is gonna be shot, and if you don't have confidence, I don't care how talented you are, you're no good.

GM: You know what, yesterday I was at the press con and you said you loved baseball more. I, and your fans, really need to know why!

And I will tell you why! I started playing baseball when I was 5 years old, up until my junior year in high school. I never missed a year playing baseball. The only reason I started playing basketball, and you're gonna get a kick out of this, is because every time we went out to the playground, I had older cousins and all my friends were older than me, and they needed an extra guy to play. I never wanted to play 'cause I hated the sport, because I was a baseball and football player. I hated basketball, but they needed an extra guy, and I always used to get picked on. They'd smack me on the head and say: "No you gonna play." So I was basically threatened to play basketball! (Laughter.)



T-MAC signs a cap for coach Joel.

RYAN LIM

It got to the point when I got tired of them picking on me. I continued to play, I picked up the sport, and by this time I was playing all three sports. I was great in all three sports. Got to high school, dominated each sport. I just started watching basketball, and I fell in love with it because I was getting good. We were playing against these older guys, and I was killing them. They hated it, too. They'd say: "How is it that he's so good and he don't even like the sport?"

I was gifted, I was probably like 12-13 years old!

GM: How tall were you?

I wasn't even six foot. That's why I can handle the ball so well 'cause I didn't get a growth spurt until my sophomore year in high school. So I used to kill those guys. So I said, maybe this is something that I really need to pick up and I just started taking it seriously, playing in high school.

GM: So at that point, goodbye baseball?

Goodbye baseball. And football, too, 'cause they didn't want me to get hurt. So my junior year in high school, I was playing baseball, and I can remember one particular game. I was pitching, and I had the Baltimore Orioles and a couple of scouts watching me. The next couple of days, I had a call from my high school baseball coach, and he said if you really took this seriously, you could become a professional baseball player.

GM: So there was a point when you really had to make a choice.

Yeah there was a point when I could've played baseball. So it was either baseball or basketball, and I chose basketball. That's why I'm still holding on to the dream [of playing baseball].

CB boys: Kinda like Michael Jordan, huh!

No, I'll be better than Mike!

CB: Would you say that moving out of Toronto in the beginning was a big push in your career?

You know what? I actually loved Toronto, I just felt like I couldn't make a career there. It was in another country, it didn't have anything to do with Vince [Carter]. He was family, it didn't have to do with him. I just felt like.. I didn't want to move my family to Canada. I didn't want my daughter going to school in Canada. It was a great experience for me because I didn't come to a young team. I came to a team where there were guys like Charles Oakley, Dee Brown, Mugsy Bogues, Kevin Willis... all these veteran players I played with. I just sat back and I learned from those guys how to handle the NBA life pretty much. And I also sat back and watched Vince do some amazing things. (Everyone smiles)

That was fun for me, but I had to get out of there.

CB: Have you really found a home in Houston?

Yeah. I hope to end my career in Houston with Yao, myself, and bring a championship.

Obstacles

GM: I saw your video at Hallstrengths.com, where you were working out. You were the voiceover, and you were saying how people were doubting your motivation, specifically your first year coach. Could you tell us about that?

You saw that? That was cool. Hmm... Yeah he was a... (takes a few seconds to answer) uhmmm.. he was a nobody. He was a coach… no I'm not even gonna say he was a coach. I don't know what he was! He was a friend of Isiah Thomas, he just got lucky and got the job. He didn't know what he was doing, he obviously didn't know what he was talking about because of what I've accomplished in my career. So yeah, he criticized me for being lazy, didn't work, don't love the game and I'd be out of the league in three years.

GM: Would you say that was one your obstacles?

Yes, definitely. I tried to overcome that because back home, when you say something like that, and it gets out on the media, 70-80 percent of people believe that, 'cause this is coming from my coach! I'm 18 years old, and it was hard to really show what I was really about and what type of player I was gonna be. So I look back now and I'm kinda glad that he did say that 'cause it really motivated me. 'Cause look at me now.

On Van Gundy, workout

CB: How's Jeff Van Gundy of the Houston Rockets as a coach?

Jeff is real demanding as far as defense, and he's real precise. When we're doing defensive drills, if you're not in a certain spot, we won't start. We have to start over. Even on offense. It could be not even a yard, like a foot! But he's also a great motivator. All the guys love him. I love him.

CB boys: How hard was the jump from high school to the pros. Do you think that if the opportunity presents itself to any high school student, will you suggest the jump to the pros? Or should one try college first?

You know, I'm a real gifted player. I have a very rare talent. Kobe is a rare talent. LeBron is a rare talent. There are more guys that try to make the jump, but were unsuccessful. So no, I don't give them advice to make the jump 'cause it's hard. It's really hard.

Physically, mentally, you have to be tough. 'Cause when you're considered an NBA prospect out of high school, obviously, you're the man in your high school team. So you never come out of the game, you're taking all the shots, you're probably averaging 30 points at the high-school level, and when you get to the NBA, you might not play. And mentally, you're like, "Why did you draft me for? You're not gonna play me!" So you're sitting on the bench, losing confidence in yourself 'cause they feel you don't have the ability to play yet, and mentally you could lose your confidence.

GM: You see that in other young players?

Of course. I see that, and that's why they're not in the league now. Like I said, the guys I just named are very rare talents.

GM: Let's talk about Adidas. Why did it take all this time for you to make another shoe?

Why only now? Well, every time I go to Asia, I bring a gift, and it's always limited. So we want to bring back my T-Mac Ones, which was six years ago, so we made a limited-edition 1,650 pairs and launch it over here, and that's my gift to Asia.

GM: You never thought about launching your own brand?

No, whatever I do, the choices I make is gonna be a mutual decision between myself and Adidas to make sure that it's something we both can gain from.

GM: How much has Adidas helped you?

Oh gosh. I have a lifetime contract, and the relationship that we've had is great. There's definitely loyalty here, we care for one another we treat one another with respect. I helped them and they helped me. Financially I'm stable, they've given me the right kind of deal, so this is a great marriage.

CB boys: As a player, what kind of extra work do you do? How many shots do you take?

I really don't have the exact numbers, but when I'm working out on the gym, I probably spend 1 to 1.5 hours shooting and drilling. I never play pick up ball after the season. I always do individual workouts, just myself and the trainer, working on my crossover, all kinds of moves, working on the post, working on shooting off the dribble. Working on spin moves. On shooting threes. Working on curls, on fades, put myself in a situation where there would be just three seconds on the clock. I do all that stuff.

Quick questions

GM: Tracy, I'll ask you a bunch of questions, and answer with the first thought that comes into your head, ok? What's your favorite arena to play in, other than in Houston?

TM: Madison Square Garden, in New York.

GM: Escalade or Range Rover?

TM: Range Rover.

GM: Biggest trash talker?

TM: Uhhh, player?

GM: Yeah. You mean there are non-players who talk trash to you?

Yeah, you got a guy like Spike Lee, he's on the side. But no, I really can't think of anyone that's talking smack. I guess GHM Payton's one of them.

GM: He looks like he talks a lot.

Yeah.

GM: Sweetest shooter?

Ray Allen.

GM: Jay-Z or Snoop?

TM: Jay. All day.

CB boys: Is it because of Beyoncé?

TM: (Laughs)

GM: Best crossover?

AI [Allen Iverson]. He doesn't use it anymore, though.

GM: Yeah why'd you think?

I dunno. But back in his younger days, well he's still young, you guys saw when he put it on Jordan, right? (Everyone nods in agreement.)

GM: Fastest player.

AI.

GM: Hardest to guard?

Kobe.

GM: Noisiest arena?

Arco.

GM: Strongest player?

Ron Artest.

GM: Friendliest player? The guy that everyone gets along with?

Shaq [O'Neal].

GM: Most memorable dunk?

Uhhhh... hhhmm... (TM scratches his chin.)

CB boys: Over Shawn Bradley!

Well, there you go. Over Shawn Bradley.

GM: Best basketball movie. Are you a big movie guy?

TM: Yeah. "Glory Road."

GM:Baseball movie?

TM: Uhmmm. "Bad News Bears." Hey it's about baseball.

GM: If you were a fan, who'd you cheer other than the Rockets?

TM: Oh, I'm a big fan of Dwade, so Miami.

THE HSBC team taking a break in Panglao island

Banking on nature's bounty

Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation's annual nature trip with the World Wide Fund for Nature-Philippines gave us a glimpse of Bohol's wonders

From page C6

more delicious alternative. We also teach our workers different livelihood activities they can pursue in tandem with farming because we believe in sustainable development."

Tarsier hunt

Although the HSBC group scheduled a trip to the Pamilacan and Balicasag islands for whale- and dolphin-watching and diving, the rough winds and choppy waters made it impossible for anyone to visit WWF's nature sites. Instead, we headed to the Tarsier Sanctuary in Corella, home to over 100 tarsiers in their natural habitat.

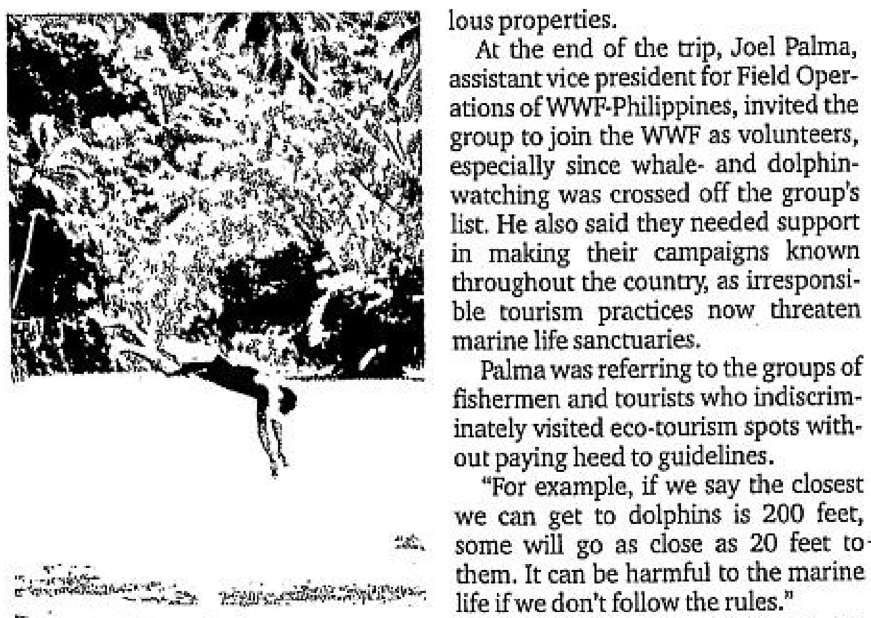
While there are a lot of tarsier "zoos" in Bohol, especially around the Loboc river areas, tourists are discouraged from visiting the commercial sites because the proprietors do not provide appropriate living conditions for the animals. Often, tarsiers are given small potted trees to perch on, and the large numbers of tourists making noise and taking photos traumatize them.

In the tarsier sanctuary, spotting a tarsier can be a challenge, as visitors have to hike through lush foliage in order to get a glimpse of the animals hiding in the trees.

After that, the group headed to the Loboc river for a cruise in one of the floating restaurants. There, we were serenaded by 20-year-old Joseph Gara, an outstanding young balladeer who can give reality talent show contestants a run for their money. While the group ate grilled dishes and watched boys drop from tall coconut trees into the river, Gara sang relaxing ballads while accompanying himself on the guitar.

Afterward, we were herded back into the bus by our tour guide, who again showed her fondness for parts of the female anatomy. Upon arriving in Carmen, site of the Chocolate Hills, she immediately pointed to one of her favorite hills. "That's a cup D," she announced.

Over 1,700 mounds of earth make up the Chocolate Hills, which are covered with grass and trees that turn brown in the summer (hence the name). To be able to get a good view of the hills, people have to hike hundreds of steps up a hill, although at the time we went there, the fog and cold rain made it nearly impossible to see the hills.



CHILDREN jumping from trees is a common sight on the Loboc river.

Aside from nature sites, the HSBC group also visited some cultural landmarks, such as the Baclayon and Dauis churches. The former is the second oldest stone church in the Philippines, while the latter is known for a deep well inside the church, the water of which reportedly has miraculous properties.

At the end of the trip, Joel Palma, assistant vice president for Field Operations of WWF-Philippines, invited the group to join the WWF as volunteers, especially since whale- and dolphin-watching was crossed off the group's list. He also said they needed support in making their campaigns known throughout the country, as irresponsible tourism practices now threaten marine life sanctuaries.

Palma was referring to the groups of fishermen and tourists who indiscriminately visited eco-tourism spots without paying heed to guidelines.

"For example, if we say the closest we can get to dolphins is 200 feet, some will go as close as 20 feet to them. It can be harmful to the marine life if we don't follow the rules."

"The coastal waters of Bohol is diverse," he said. "Looking for a sustainable coastal resource eco-tourism program is key to the survival and sustainability of Bohol. However, eco-tourism has its limitations. Control measures have to be done."

E-mail the author at biancaconsunji@yahoo.com

THE DAUIS church has a deep well of reportedly miraculous water.

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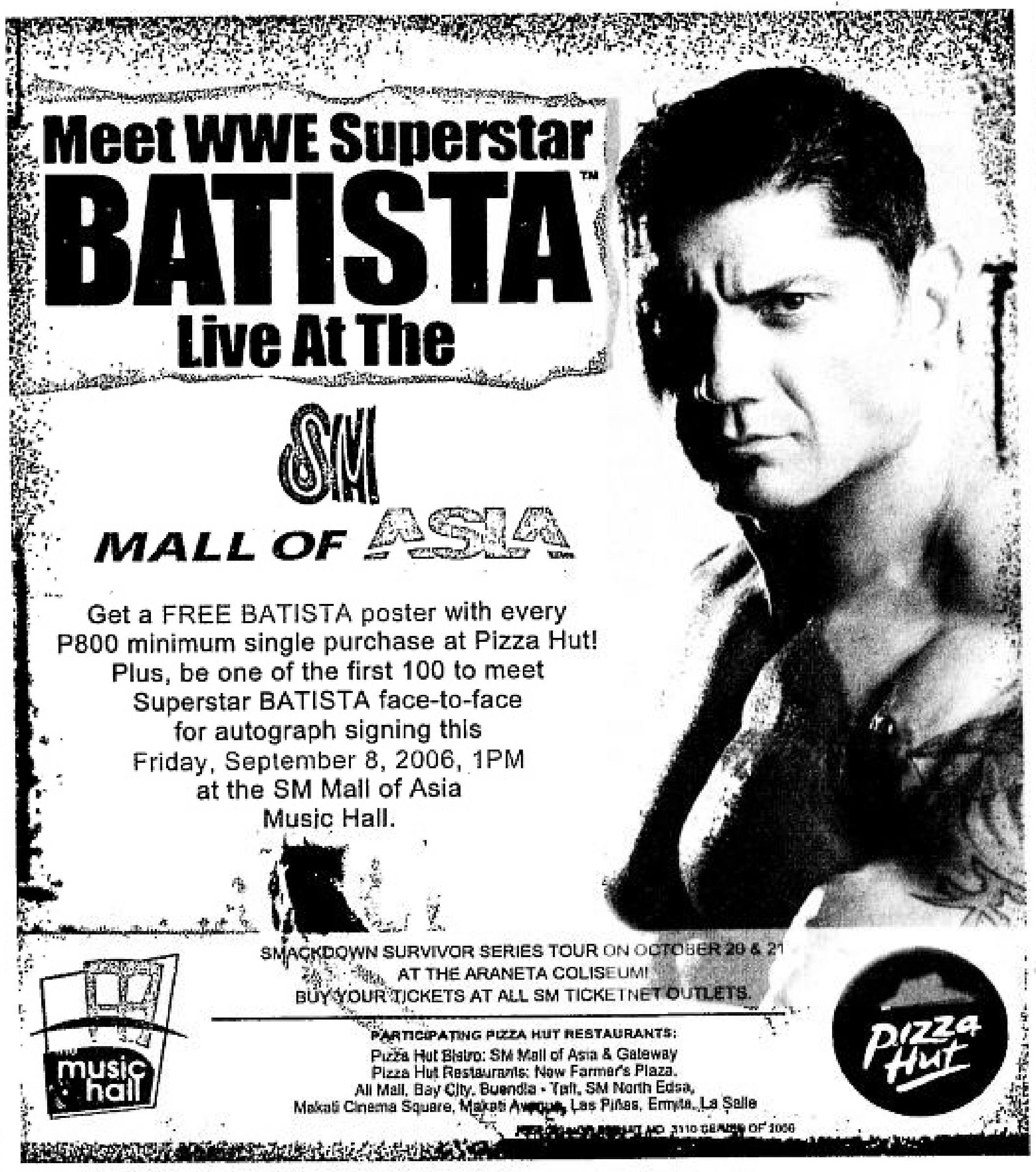

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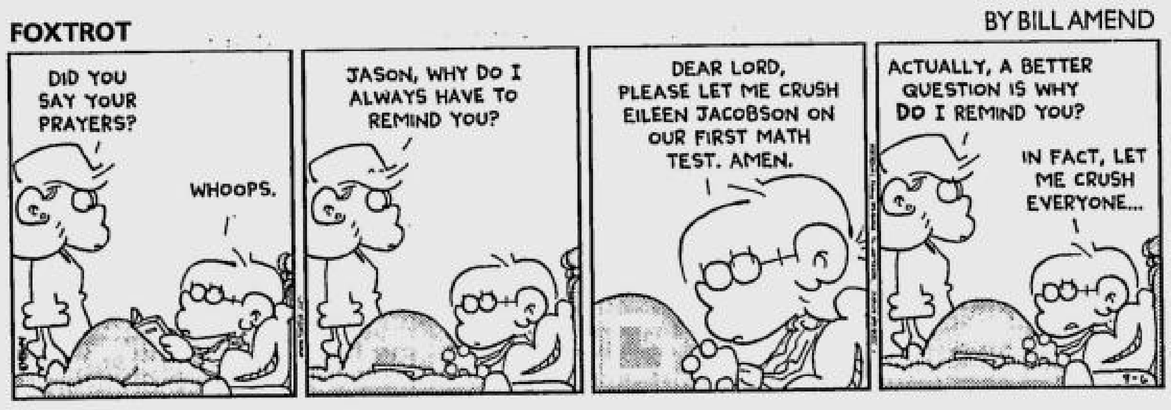
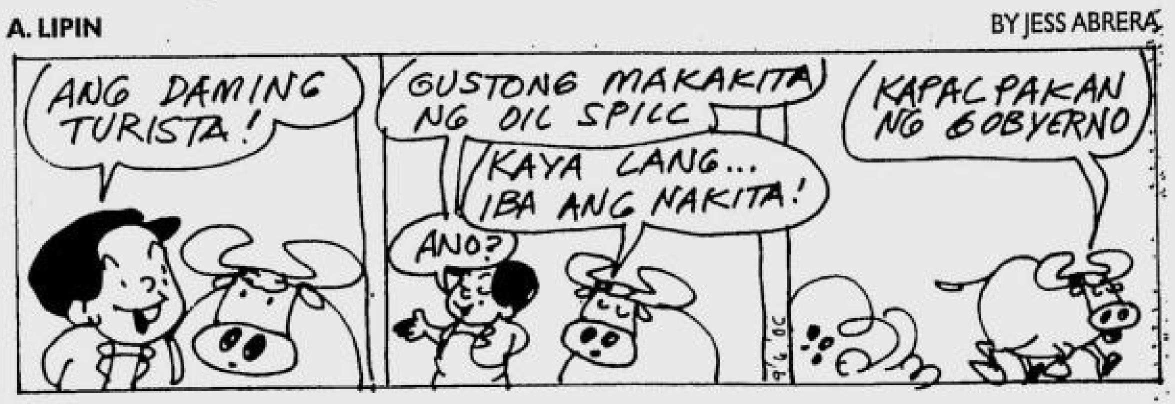
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


DID YOU SAY YOUR PRAYERS?
WHOOPS.
JASON, WHY DO I ALWAYS HAVE TO REMIND YOU?
DEAR LORD, PLEASE LET ME CRUSH EILEEN JACOBSON ON OUR FIRST MATH TEST. AMEN.
ACTUALLY, A BETTER QUESTION IS WHY DO I REMIND YOU?
IN FACT, LET ME CRUSH EVERYONE...
9-6

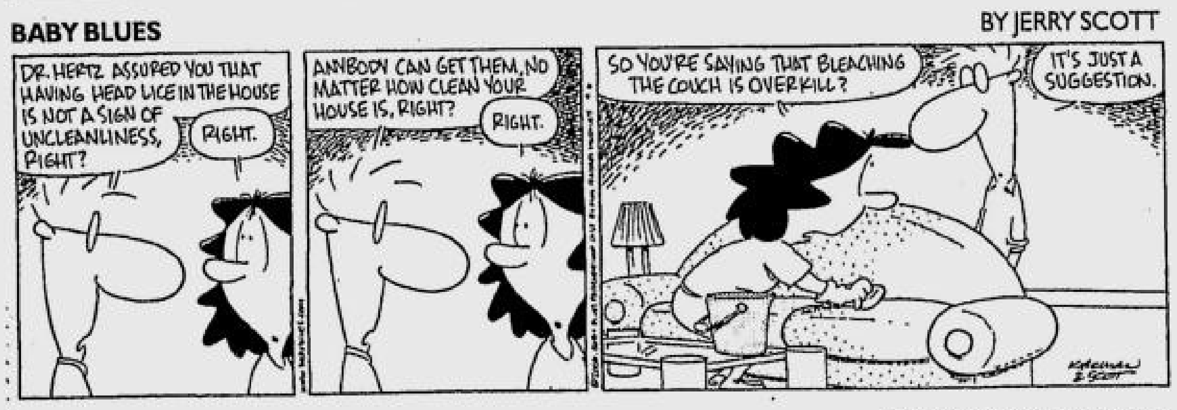
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG DAMING TURISTA!
GUSTONG MAKAKITA NG OIL SPILL
ANO?
KAYA LANG... IBA ANG NAKITA!
KAPALPAKAN NG GOBYERNO

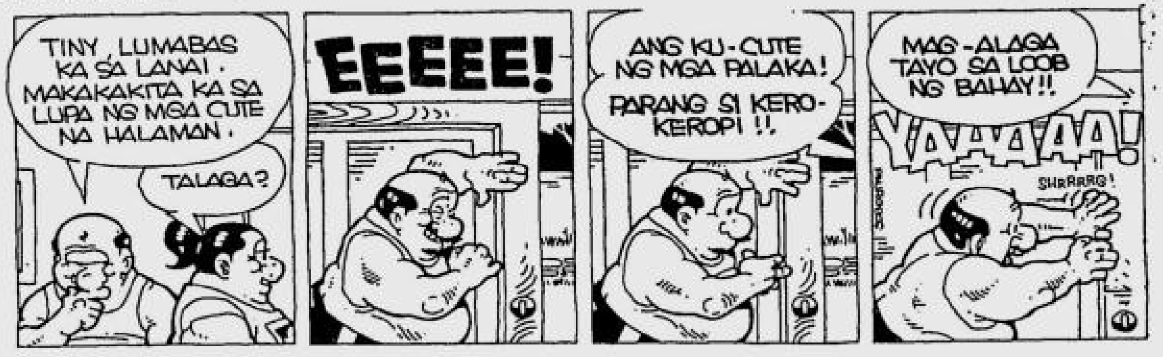
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


DR. HERTZ ASSURED YOU THAT HAVING HEAD LICE IN THE HOUSE IS NOT A SIGN OF UNCLEANLINESS, RIGHT?
RIGHT.
ANYBODY CAN GET THEM, NO MATTER HOW CLEAN YOUR HOUSE IS, RIGHT?
RIGHT.
SO YOU'RE SAYING THAT BLEACHING THE COUCH IS OVERKILL?
IT'S JUST A SUGGESTION.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

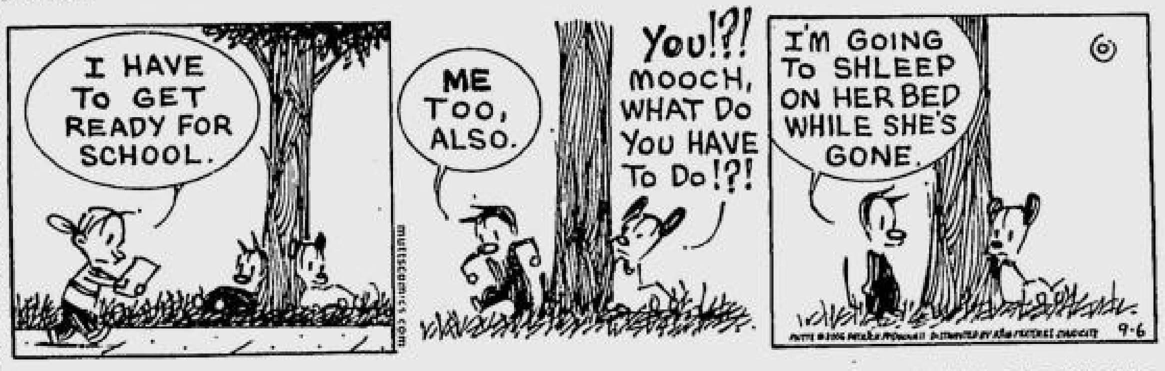
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


TINY, LUMABAS KA SA LANAI. MAKAKAKITA KA SA LUPA NG MGA CUTE NA HALAMAN.
TALAGA?
EEEEE!
ANG KU-CUTE NG MGA PALAKA!
PARANG SI KERO-KEROPI!!
MAG-ALAGA TAYO SA LOOB NG BAHAY!!
YAAAAAA!
SHRRRRG!

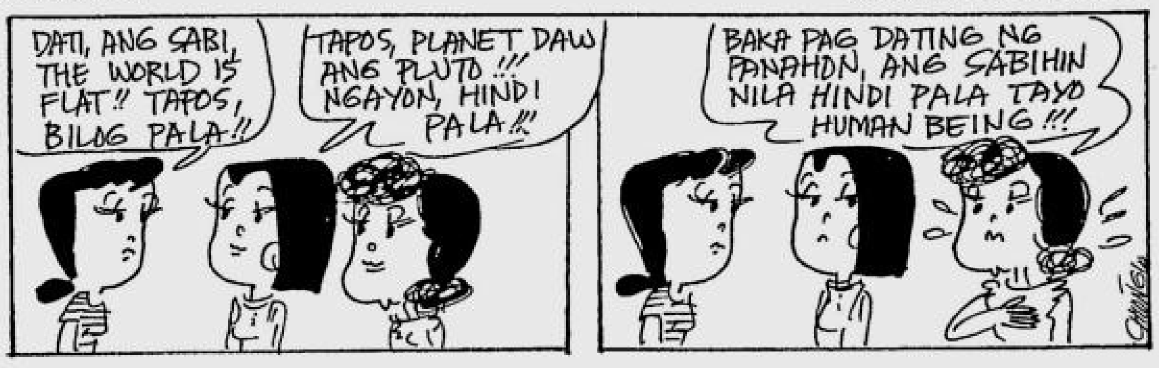
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I HAVE TO GET READY FOR SCHOOL.
ME TOO, ALSO.
YOU!?! MOOCH, WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO!?!
I'M GOING TO SHLEEP ON HER BED WHILE SHE'S GONE.
muttscomics.com
9-6

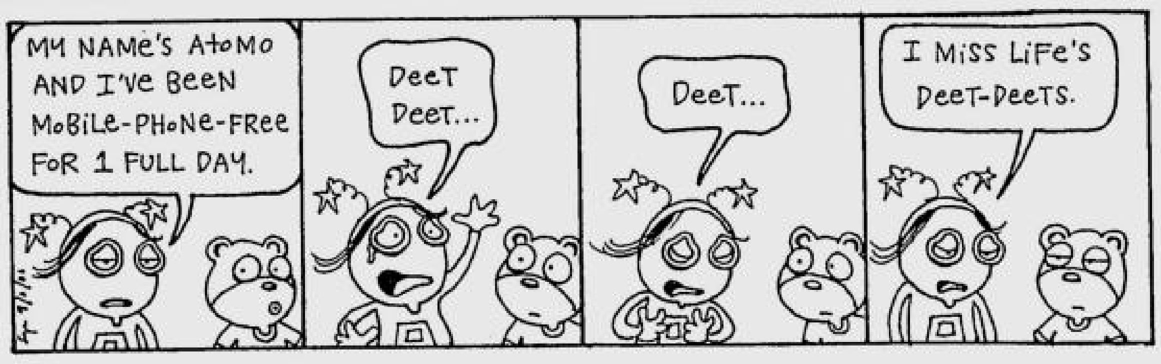
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DATI, ANG SABI, THE WORLD IS FLAT!! TAPOS, BILOG PALA!!
TAPOS, PLANET DAW ANG PLUTO!!! NGAYON, HINDI PALA!!!
BAKA PAG DATING NG PANAHON, ANG SABIHIN NILA HINDI PALA TAYO HUMAN BEING!!!

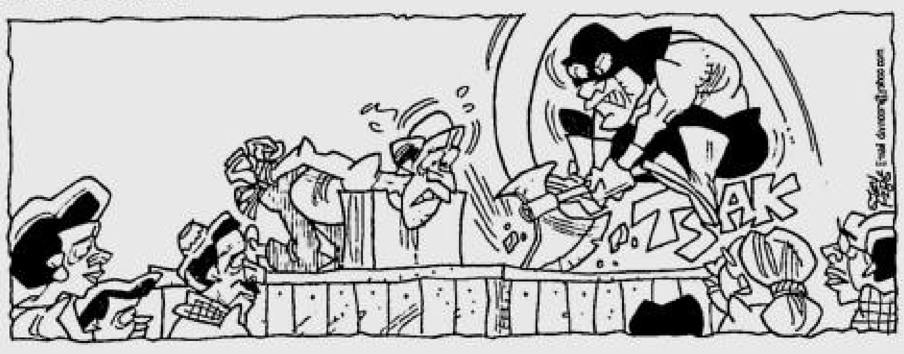
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


MY NAME'S ATOMO AND I'VE BEEN MOBILE-PHONE-FREE FOR 1 FULL DAY.
DEET DEET...
DEET...
I MISS LIFE'S DEET-DEETS.

DIVINE COMEDY

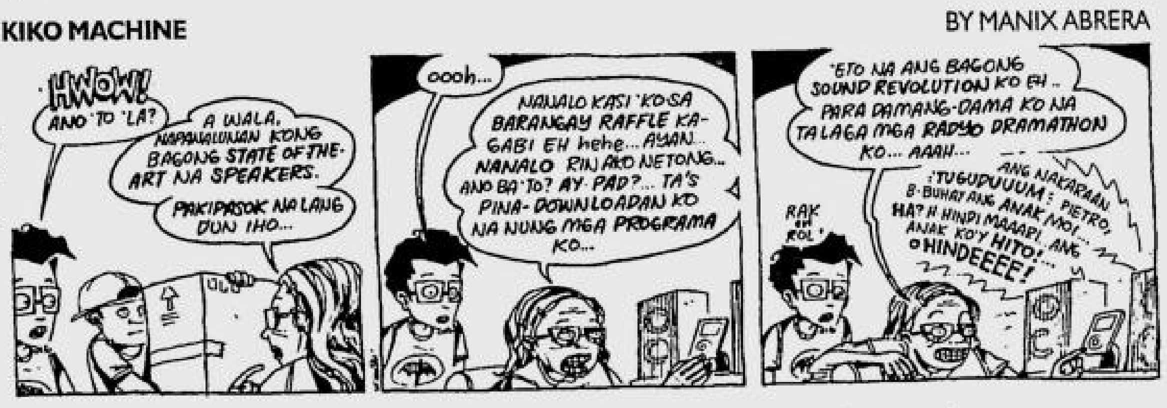
BY STEVEN PABALINAS



TUMAGAL ANG EXECUTION DAHIL ANG KINUHA NILANG BERDUGO AY DULING

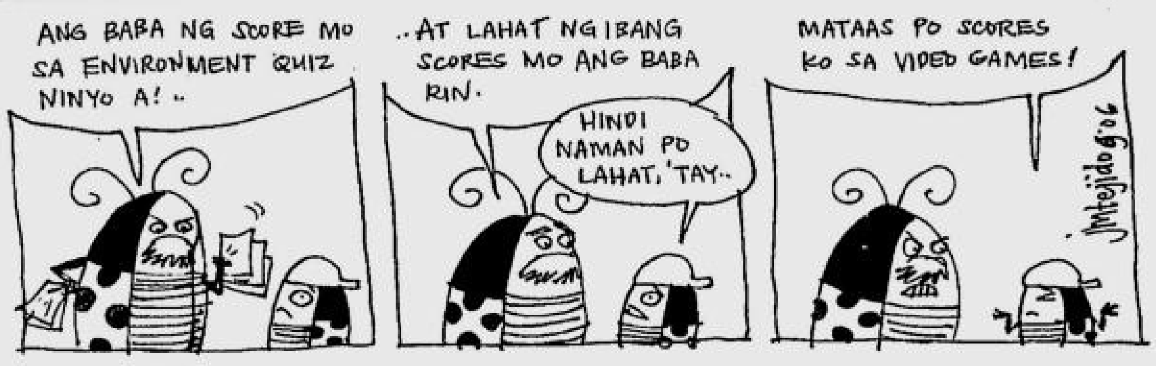
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HWOW! ANO 'TO 'LA?
A WALA. NAPANALUNAN KONG BAGONG STATE OF THE ART NA SPEAKERS.
PAKIPASOK NA LANG DUN IHO...
oooh...
NANALO KASI 'KO SA BARANGAY RAFFLE KAGABI EH hehe... AYAN... NANALO RIN AKO NETONG... ANO BA 'TO? AY PAD?... TA'S PINA-DOWNLOADAN KO NA NUNG MGA PROGRAMA KO...
'ETO NA ANG BAGONG SOUND REVOLUTION KO EH.. PARA DAMANG-DAMA KO NA TALAGA MGA RADYO DRAMATHON KO... AAAH...
RAK EN ROL'
ANG NAKARAAN :TUGUDUUUM: PIETRO, B-BUHAY ANG ANAK MO!... HA?!! HINDI MAAARI, ANG ANAK KO'Y HITO!... OHINDEEEE!

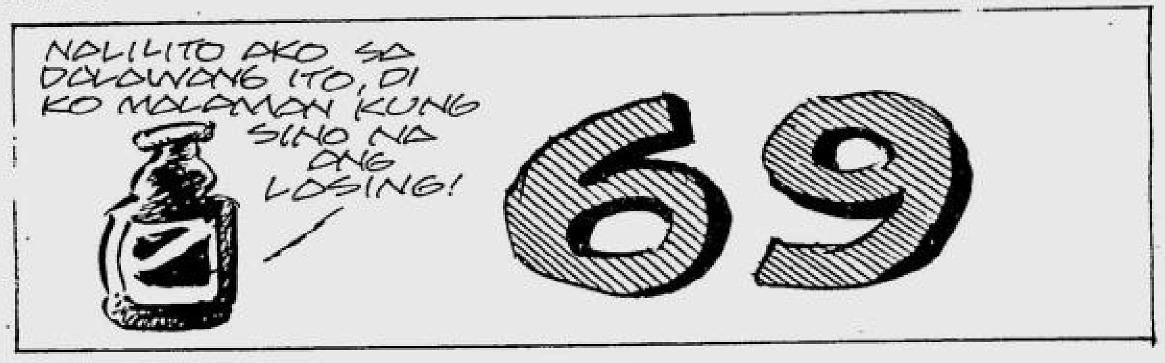
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANG BABA NG SCORE MO SA ENVIRONMENT QUIZ NINYO A!..
..AT LAHAT NG IBANG SCORES MO ANG BABA RIN.
HINDI NAMAN PO LAHAT, 'TAY..
MATAAS PO SCORES KO SA VIDEO GAMES!
jmtejido 9.6.06

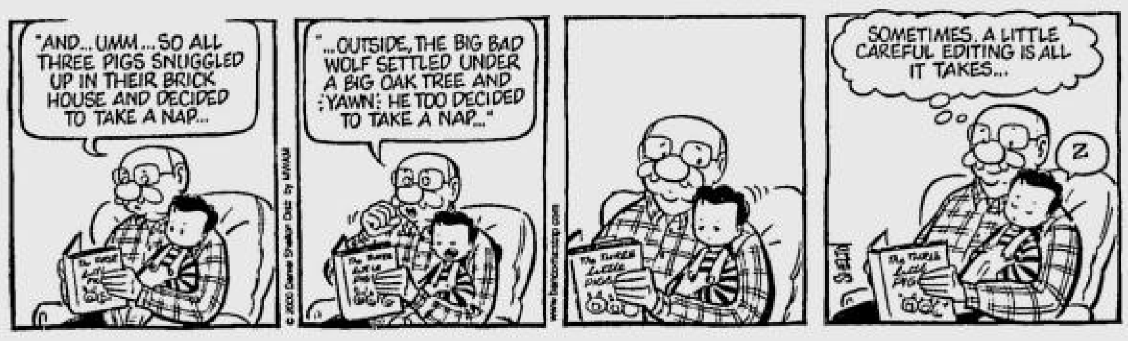
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


NALILITO AKO SA DALAWANG ITO, DI KO MALAMAN KUNG SINO NA ANG LOSING!
69

BEN

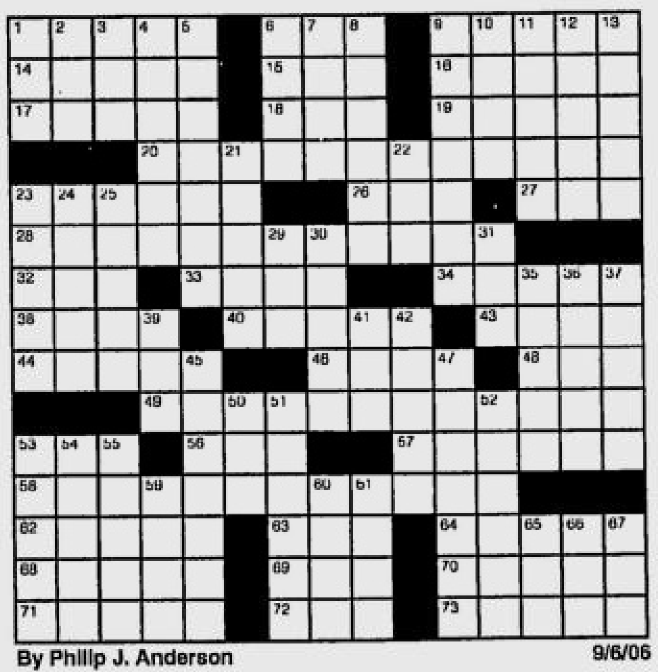
BY DANIEL SHELTON


"AND...UMM...SO ALL THREE PIGS SNUGGLED UP IN THEIR BRICK HOUSE AND DECIDED TO TAKE A NAP..."
"...OUTSIDE, THE BIG BAD WOLF SETTLED UNDER A BIG OAK TREE AND ;YAWN; HE TOO DECIDED TO TAKE A NAP..."
SOMETIMES, A LITTLE CAREFUL EDITING IS ALL IT TAKES...
Z
The Three Little Pigs

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 __ the Hutt
6 R.E. Lee's nation
9 Titled ladies
14 Of bees
15 Capp and Capone
16 Get all melodramatic
17 Paris subway
18 Old cloth
19 Relish
20 Badminton player's forte?
23 Actress Dahl
26 Arctic expolorer John
27 One-eighty from WNW
28 Seismologist's forte?
32 Designer of the Vietnam Memorial
33 Successor of Ramses I
34 Trial runs
38 Without delay!
40 Alex Haley book
43 Rex's stout sleuth
44 Complains
46 Flying mammals
48 Sea of France
49 Mason's forte?
53 Mr. Ziegfeld
56 Before, before
57 Takes care of
58 Wrestler's forte?
62 Subarctic forest
63 Big __, CA
64 Russian villa
68 Input
69 Keatsian work
70 "__ Frome"
71 Medicated
72 Recent
73 Staggers

DOWN
1 Tight spot
2 Simian
3 Tiny portion
4 Sensory organ of a catfish
5 Applies oils to
6 Corker
7 Side order, briefly
8 Odin's place
9 Way down
10 Asian nanny
11 Flick
12 Certain collars
13 Suit material
21 Pass on (to)
22 Mai __ cocktail
23 Company with a spokesduck
24 Mrs. Gorbachev
25 Of the moon
29 Simpson trial judge
30 Tearful woman
31 O.T. book
35 Finalists' determiner
36 City on the Adige
37 Silage growth
39 2nd letter add-on
41 Fancy marble
42 East German secret police
45 Estate manager
47 Long and thin
50 Sphere
51 Actor Liam
52 Papal emissary
53 Wined and dined
54 Argentine plain
55 Final bios
59 S-shaped molding
60 Bare
61 Sketched
65 Fidel's comrade
66 Actor Linden
67 T or F, e.g.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By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

9/6/06

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

R	F	D	S	■	P	I	G	S	■	H	O	H	U	M
E	R	I	C	■	O	R	A	L	■	E	D	I	N	A
S	E	A	R	■	P	E	S	O	■	R	E	M	I	X
T	E	N	U	R	E	■	M	A	S	E	R	A	T	I
S	H	E	B	O	Y	G	A	N	W	I	■	L	E	E
■	■	■	■	D	E	U	S	■	I	N	C	A	■	■
T	A	H	O	E	■	S	K	I	N	■	A	Y	E	S
E	V	E	N	O	U	T	■	B	E	L	F	A	S	T
D	A	R	E	■	M	O	A	S	■	Y	E	S	E	S
■	■	S	L	A	P	■	B	E	A	N	■	■	■	■
A	C	H	■	M	E	K	O	N	G	D	E	L	T	A
T	E	E	N	I	D	O	L	■	R	E	V	E	A	L
P	A	Y	E	E	■	R	I	C	E	■	I	N	T	O
A	S	P	E	N	■	E	S	S	E	■	C	Y	A	N
R	E	A	D	S	■	A	H	A	S	■	T	A	R	E

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9/5/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You need constant stimulation to avoid being bored. You seek adventure and thrills; at the same time, you want the security and comfort of a cozy home. Ever the idealist, you want to make the world a better place. Your ability to grow and transform increases as you age. Expect a change in the year ahead—perhaps as significant as in 1997.

Birthdate of: Jeff Foxworthy, comedian; Rosie Perez, actress; Greg Rusedski, tennis player.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a fabulous day at work. You can get an enormous amount done—and enjoy doing it. Coworkers are not only supportive, they're fun to be with! (Ain't life grand?)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Today favors love, romance, activities with children, professional sports, the entertainment world and the hospitality industry. It's a great day to have a wonderful time.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a lovely day to entertain at home. It's also an excellent day for real estate deals. People are happy, generous and full of good feelings for each other.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): It's so easy to feel optimistic and upbeat today. You easily think the best and expect the best. Conversations with siblings and relatives are enthusiastic and pleasing.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is an excellent day for business and commerce. All financial deals are favored. Trust your moneymaking intuition. Shopping could bring you profitable buys.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is your lucky day! The Sun is in your sign receiving a lovely aspect from moneybags Jupiter. Enjoy good fortune. Conversations with others are upbeat and positive.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Work behind the scenes if you can today. You can definitely generate a profit or think of new ways to earn money. Dealings with the government and large institutions are favored.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): All group activities will be successful today. Discussions about future goals are productive. Schmooze with ease and accept all invitations.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Today is the perfect day to talk to bosses, parents, teachers and authority figures. People are inclined to go along with whatever you suggest. It's also an excellent day for group activities.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Travel plans and matters connected with publishing, the media and higher education are extremely positive and successful today. You see that a good idea just sells itself.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Gifts, goodies and favors from others come your way today. Anything having to do with inheritances, estates and shared property can be profitable.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a wonderful day to enjoy the company of loved ones, especially partners and close friends. Business with important customers and members of the public goes well. Tell someone you care

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

	4		2	5		8	9	
	7	3	8			6		
				4		1	8	
	3						4	
	9	5		6				
		2			4	5	7	
	8	9		3	7		2	

Difficulty Level ★★★

9/06

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	3	2	5	1	8	4	6	7
4	5	1	6	7	2	9	8	3
6	8	7	9	3	4	5	1	2
1	6	3	8	4	7	2	9	5
5	7	4	2	9	1	6	3	8
2	9	8	3	6	5	7	4	1
3	4	5	1	2	6	8	7	9
7	2	9	4	8	3	1	5	6
8	1	6	7	5	9	3	2	4

Difficulty Level ★★

MICHAEL Molina (right) with band Penguin

JAMIR Torres with Jason Mraz

What makes you a rock star?

ARE YOU LIVING THE rock 'n' roll life?

2bU! is letting you in on the "Rock Star Supernova" craze! Unleash your inner rock star to win exclusive premium items from Star World's top-rating reality TV show. Keep sending us your most recent high-resolution photos at a rockin' gig, and tell us in five sentences or less, what makes your life rock? All entries must be e-mailed to rockstar_2bu@yahoo.com—just don't forget to include all the juicy details (your full name, date, place, gig/band).

JESSICA Gutierrez with Ira Cruz of Bamboo

Each week, up to three rocked-out readers will win cool prizes from "Rock Star: Supernova" and have their winning entries published in upcoming 2bU issues. So go ahead and rock our world, you know you want to!

"Rock Star: Supernova" airs live, exclusively on Star World every Wednesdays (8:30 a.m.) and Thursdays (8 a.m.), with primetime broadcasts at 8 p.m. on the same day.

Here are last week's readers who rock!

Michael Molina with band Penguin

"My life rocks because I belong to a great band that calls itself Penguin. My band mates are all good friends, and we have such a blast rehearsing and performing together. I consider my band as one of the best things in my life!"

Jamir Torres

"Here I am with Jason Mraz during his last visit here in the country. I was lucky enough to go backstage and meet him during his gig at the NBC Tent. Meeting international artists who rock is such an awesome experience! I hope that more musicians (or bands) like him—with true talent—come to our shores more often."

Jessica Gutierrez

"Aside from my family, it's my friends and music that make my life rock!"

Winners can claim their prizes by calling Pilar Cindy Corrales of Stratworks at 7513805 or 06.

Bulacan parish marks Our Lady's birthday

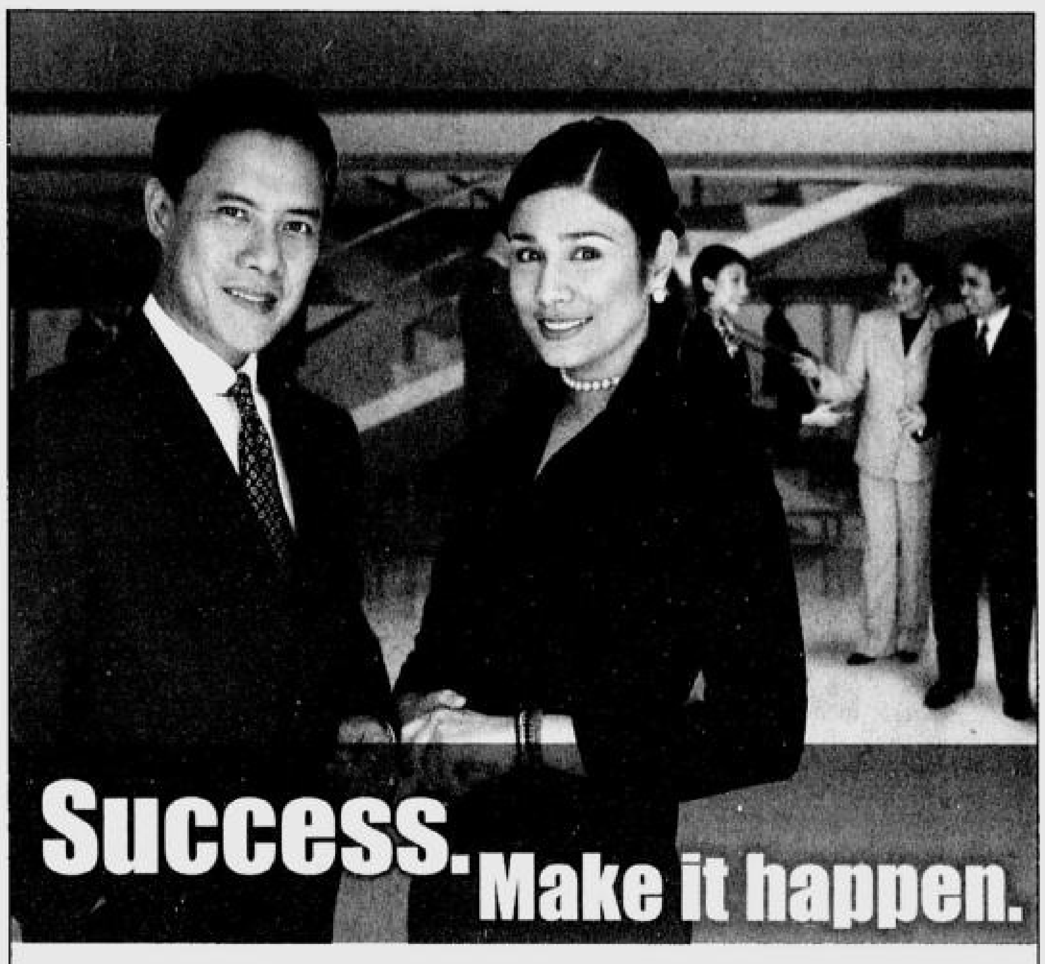
SEPT. 8 IS THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF MARY, Mother of God and of Mankind. It will be the 2021st celebration all over the world.

In Pulilan, Bulacan Parish of San Isidro Labrador, it will be held on Sept. 7 starting with the 4 p.m. penitential procession. The Eucharist Celebration which follows will be officiated by Most Rev. Bishop Teodoro C. Bacani Jr., D.D., with parish priest Rev. Fr. Leo de Jesus and guest priests concelebrating with him.

The annual celebration is sponsored by Colegio de Santa Philomena, a pro-life community in Pulilan.

Alumni homecoming set Nov. 25

THE ST. JOSEPH ACADEMY (SJA)-LA CONsolacion College (LCC) Alumni Association is searching for outstanding alumni to highlight the 56th grand alumni homecoming on Nov. 25 at the LCC Quadrangle. Nomination forms for the categories of Arts, Business, Banking and Finance, Community Service, Construction and Engineering, Education, Entertainment, Law, Medicine, Public Admin/Gov't Service and Religion may be obtained and submitted to La Consolacion College Caloocan City. Call 2879703, 3649248 or 0917-8270021.



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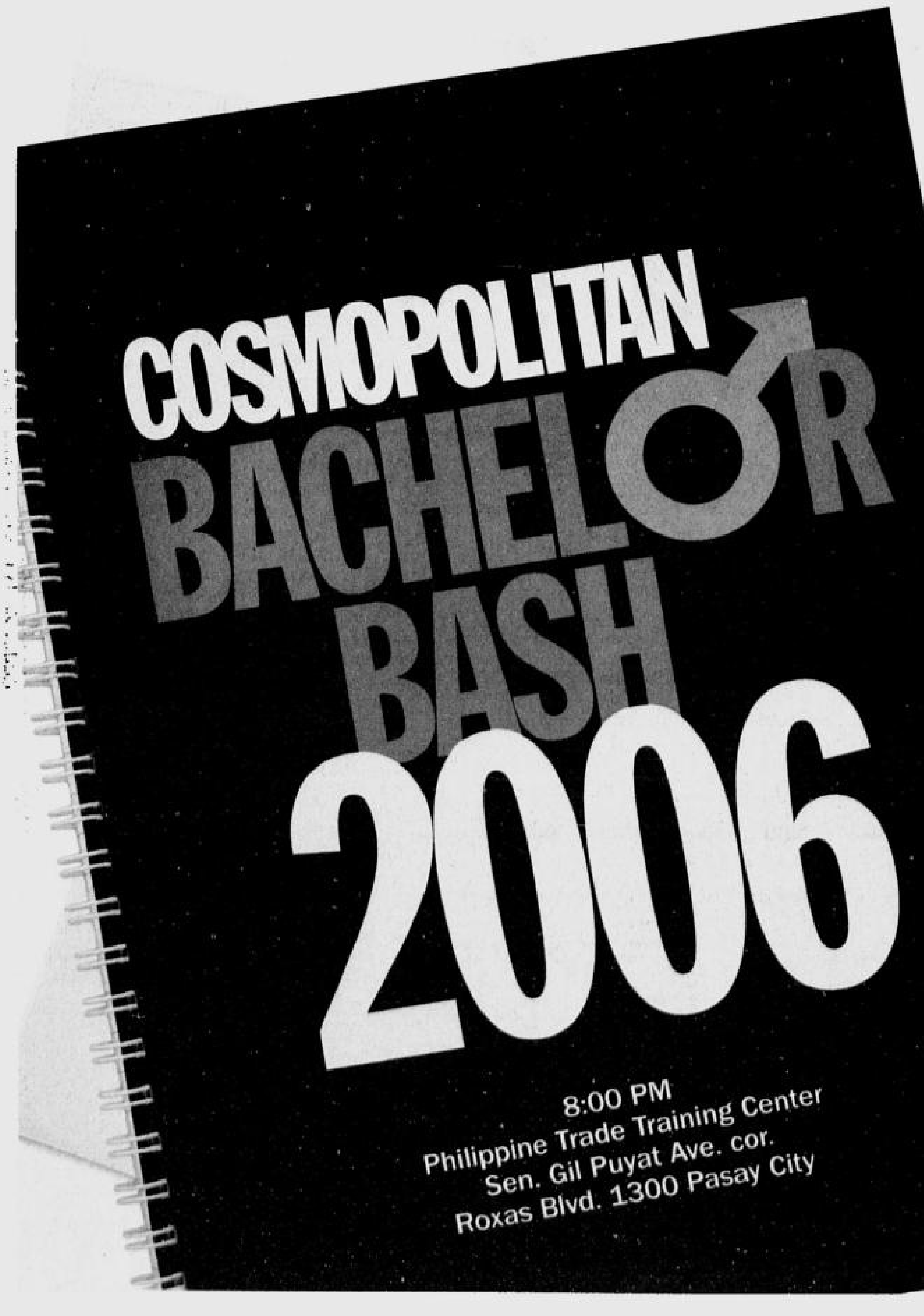

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SUMMIT MEDIA

BOHOL Bee Farm's Vicky Wallace offers a taste of fresh honey from a beehive.

Banking on nature's bounty

A TARSIER in its natural element at the Tarsier Sanctuary

Text by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent
Photos by Robby Sibal

THE BUS WAS RUMBLING ALONG A rocky path, and the passengers, all hungry and restless, were only half-listening to the tour guide ramble on about the various delicacies and traditions of Bohol.

"From June to August, by the light of the full moon, women go to the fields for an *ube*-planting ritual," the tour guide was saying. "But there's a requirement for them to be able to plant the *ube*. They have to have big breasts, and they have to plant it in the nude."

At that point, all the people on the bus sat up to listen carefully.

Elated by her suddenly interested audience, the guide went on with her story. "While planting the *ube*, women say, '*Lumaki ka katulad nito*,'" she said, gesturing to her ample chest. "The men also have a similar ritual, but they do it when they plant cassava. In that case, they say, '*Humaba ka kagaya ko*.'"

Everyone cracked up. The men, in particular, were keen on seeing the *ube*-planting ritual.

However, the trip being the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation's (HSBC) annual nature trip with the World Wide Fund for Nature-Philippines (WWF), the plans for a side trip to *ube* plantations were vetoed.

Instead, the party went on to the Cambubuhat river to visit a remote fishing village in the town of Buenavista for a fresh seafood dinner.

Before the dinner, guests were taken on a 15-minute *banca* ride down the Cambubuhat river. The boats, which could handle only three to four riders, creaked reluctantly at first, but eventually sailed along with the smooth current. Native brown-rice *suman* and fresh *buko* juice were given to passengers, who sat back and enjoyed the quiet ride down the river.

Sustainable development

However, the snack didn't stop us from tearing into the fresh oysters, shrimps, crabs and fish served at the village dining hut.

"Everyone in the fishing village helped prepare the food for us," explained Tessa Cuenca, HSBC vice president for public affairs. "Every time visitors come to the village, all the members of the community pitch in; everyone's involved in the preparation. Part of their livelihood depends on tourists."

"HSBC does the nature trips in order to support environmental awareness and promote staff involvement in the practice of corporate social responsibility," she continued. "We ask our staff to volunteer in areas where conservation work is being done by our environmental partners."

After the meal, a group of women performed a dance ritual used in making *buri*, a fine powder made from grain used for food and clothing, among others. After that, the HSBC group went to the Bohol Bee Farm to retire for the night.

The Bohol Bee Farm, situated in Panglao Island, is a sprawling resort and organic farm perched on top of a cliff by the sea. All the dishes served in the resort are natural and organic, with many recipes made with raw honey from the farm's bees. First-time visitors should make it a point to try the Bee Farm's special offerings, such as the honey, mango, pesto and chocolate-flavored spreads, which are excellent with the resort's *kamote* bread.

The owner, Vicky Wallace, a former nurse who went back to the Philippines to raise her children and put up the farm, is very hands-on in all the operations. During our stay in the resort, she conducted a farm tour and explained the farm's philosophy.

"We don't need to spend for costly conventional fertilizers or harmful pesticides," Wallace said. "Organic farming is the healthier,

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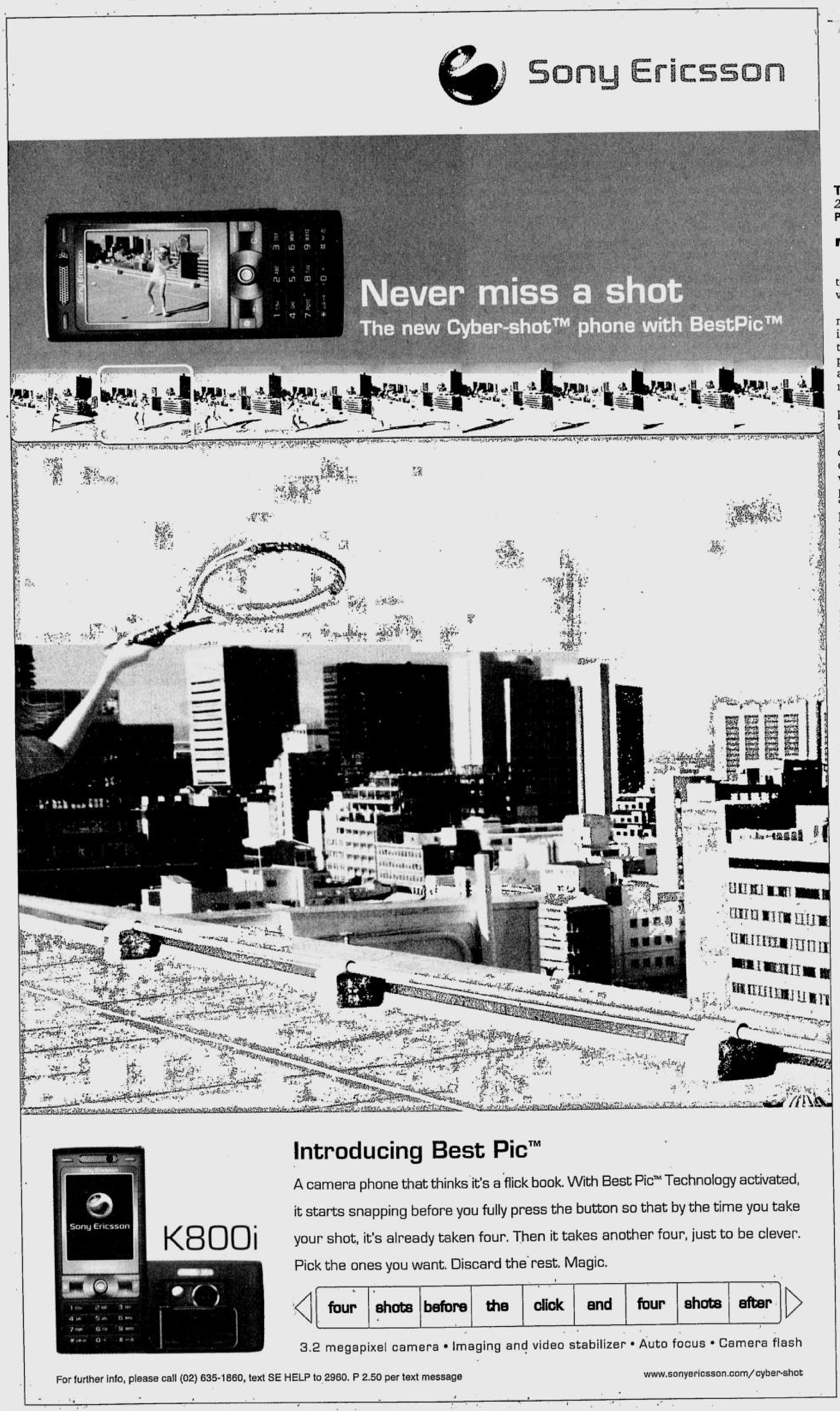

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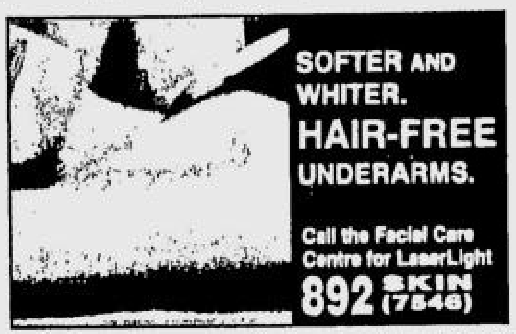
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JUDGES' favorites Ramirr Grepo, left, and Giancarlo Magdangal

FrancisM, Pilita Corrales and Mr. C: "It's out of our hands."

Vote, Ryan C says

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Romy Homillada

THREE JUDGES' FAVORITES on "Philippine Idol" failed the test of text votes, catching everyone by surprise on the first elimination night of ABC 5's talent search on Sunday night.

"Everyone" included the show's British consulting producer, Sheldon Bailey.

"But that's democracy in action," Bailey told INQUIRER Entertainment shortly after the show. "It's really up to the people. You'll never know which way the vote will go."

Chosen Top 4—by SMS voting, which started right after performance night at the SM Megamall Cinema 3 on Saturday—among the male contestants were Miguel Mendoza, Reymond Sajor, Andrae Ybañez and Jan Nieto. This means they have sure slots in the finals.

"Idol" judges Ryan Cayabyab, Pilita Corrales and Francis Magalona were off by three slots. They earlier predicted—enthusiastically—that contenders Ramirr Grepo, Robert Bernadas and Giancarlo Magdangal would land in the Top 4.

"I was surprised, too," Nieto said on Sunday. "The judges thought Ramirr gave the best performance last night. When there were only two of us left on stage, I was sure Ramirr had the edge."

Cayabyab offered an explanation: "Pinoys [could have] voted for the ones with the best charm and appeal. Because they saw how well received Ramirr's performance was, they probably thought he was sure of getting pole position. So they voted for the underdogs—Pinoys that we are. The same thing happened with Gian."

Not giving up

Grepo said he wasn't about to give up. Two male contenders will be picked on Sept. 16 for the wild-card round. (The goal is for 12 finalists—six males and six females.)

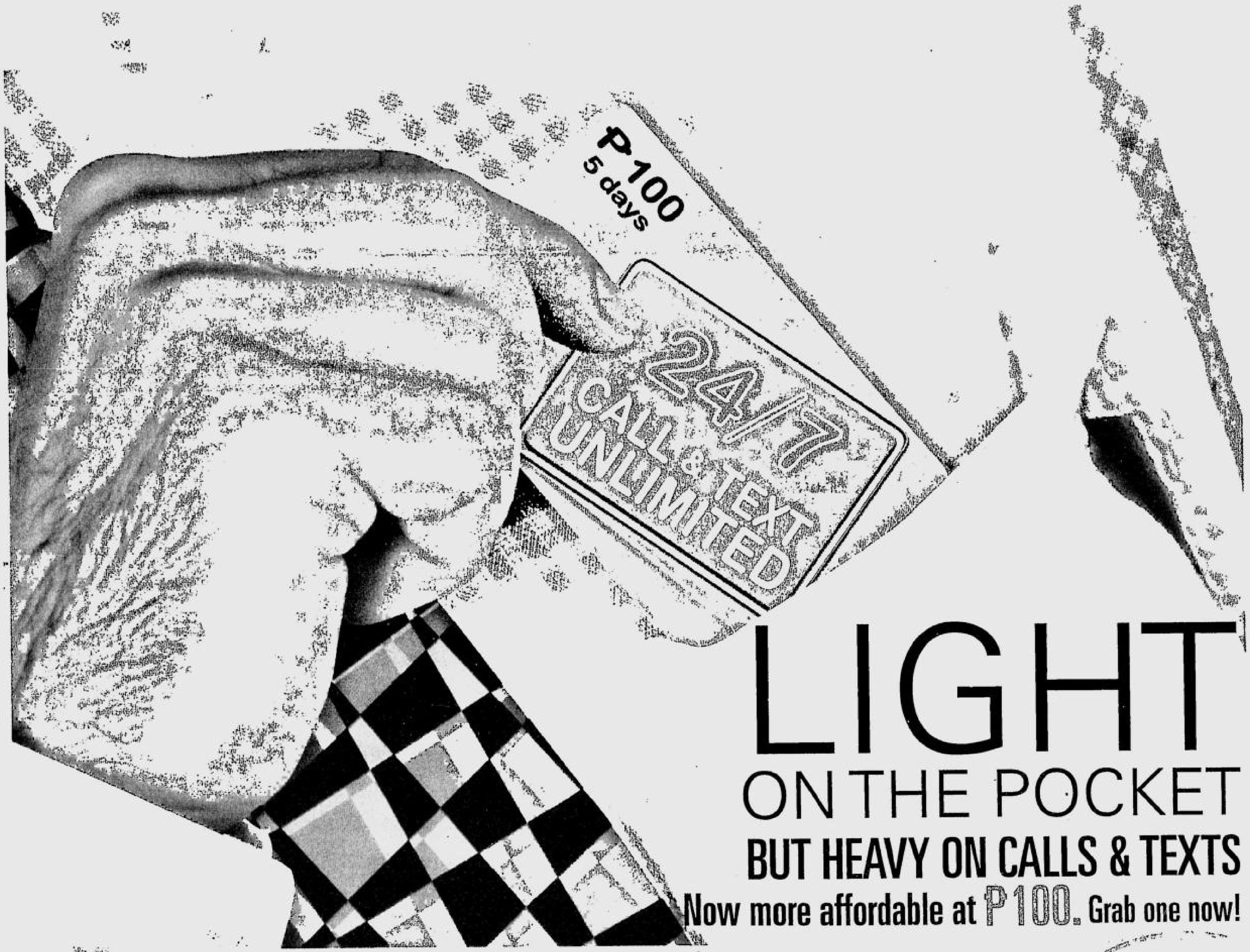
"My family is campaigning really hard for me. I will keep doing my best and working for more support," the long-haired rocker vowed.

Bernadas is just as intently eyeing one of the wild-card slots. "It's not over," he stressed.

The battle for the Top 4 among the 12 female contestants is set this weekend.

"This competition is not simple," Mr. C pointed out. "A lot of people have texted me about the results. I only have this to say: 'Why are you complaining? Maybe you didn't vote full-blast for your favorites. This is out of our hands; it's your call now."

THE TOP 4, clockwise from left: Drae Ybañez, Reymond Sajor, Jan Nieto and Miguel Mendoza



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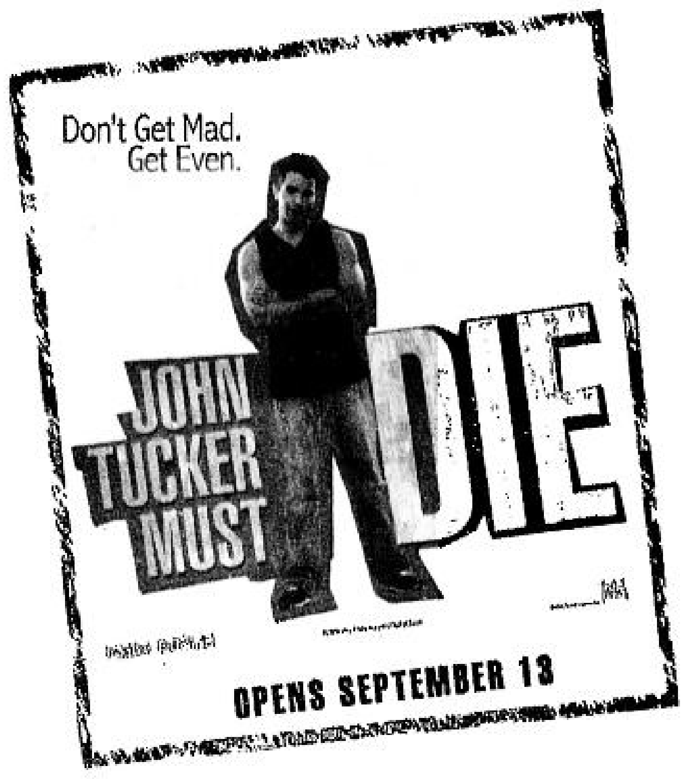
WESTLIFE (Feehily is second from right).

RUSHES

West of whatever (outtakes from a press con)



Don't Get Mad. Get Even.
JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
OPENS SEPTEMBER 13

AT THE WESTLIFE PRESS CONFERENCE ON Monday, so many rules were imposed on the media.

Some were reasonable ("Please keep cell phones on silent mode"); others were overbearing ("Please don't ask about one of the members' sexuality") and perplexing ("No picture-taking").

One rule ("Please put all recorders on the presidential table before the band comes out") smacked of conceit because the subtext was that no one should approach the artists.

A reporter was not about to be cowed.

He outed himself as a devoted fan, asked three questions, then—protocol be damned—he walked up to the venerable presidential table to have his precious Westlife poster autographed, his hand pumped and his picture taken with the boys.

As coup de grâce, he dished out a hefty portion of the band's "If I Let You Go."

Surprise laugh

A routine question resulted in unintended comedy.

Asked which *diva* they would love to work with next, in light of a collaboration number with Diana Ross ("When You Tell Me That You Love Me," in their latest album "Face to Face"), Shane Filan quipped: "Michael Jackson."

The entire room was in stitches.

HELEN Mirren as Elizabeth I

A perplexed Shane wondered, "Why are you laughing?"

After the booboo was explained Shane backtracked: 'Jackson's a *divo*. I'd love to work with Streisand."

Mark Feehily, who is openly gay, laughed through the whole exchange. He discussed his own coming out of the closet, saying it "changed my life dramatically."

Westlife had a concert at the Big Dome that same night.

Cerrudo series

Tonight, Bimbo Cerrudo performs in yet another edition of "Classico... Classic Ko."

BIMBO Cerrudo

His fellow performers could learn a thing or two from this tenacious and talented artist. Last year, he mounted his "Classico" series at Q-sine in Makati—17 shows in all.

Last week we caught Bimbo's ninth "Classic Ko" performance at Teatrino in Greenhills. This year's series winds up Nov. 22—for a total of 20 shows.

What's his secret?

For us, it's a formidable repertoire and good intentions.

Each of the shows since last year has been earmarked for charity.

But we didn't go see the show last week for that reason. We had thoroughly enjoyed one of the Q-sine shows; again, Bimbo at Teatrino did not disappoint.

With the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra backing him up, he sang songs that sent his listeners on a flashback mode. 'The Story of a Starry Night." "With a Song in My Heart," "Yesterday I Heard the Rain..."

By the time he got to "I Can Dream, Can I?/ I'll Be Seeing You," many women in the audience no longer cared about revealing their age, and sang along.

Bimbo hushed up the hall once more with the lyrical "If You Go Away." And up till the end of his second encore number he basked in the sighs of his virtual captives. They might as well have sent up heart-shaped thought balloons.

Royal espionage?

LONDON—Aides to Queen Elizabeth II denied reports Friday that her legal team had been sent to Venice to view the world premiere of a film about the royal family's reaction to the death of Princess Diana.

Italian newspapers said the lawyers will be watching for any perceived slight in Stephen Frear's film, "The Queen," which has built a following among critics at the Venice Film Festival. The film tackles the attempts by Prime Minister Tony Blair (Michael Sheen) to find a way for the distant Queen Elizabeth II (Helen Mirren, who also played Elizabeth I in a Hallmark movie) to reconnect with the British public after Diana's death **AFP**

The late Scarlett

VENICE—Speaking of the Venice film fest, Scarlett Johansson and the rest of "The Black Dahlia" cast infuriated organizers by turning up 45 minutes late for the opening ceremony. Italian media believed the delay may have been connected to "whims" over the actress's hairdo. *Reuters*

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YOU, ME & DUPREE 1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30	LITTLE MAN 3:10 / 7:30	THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA 1:00 / 3:50 / 6:40 / 9:30	
MY SUPER X-GIRLFRIEND 1:00 / 5:20 / 9:40	YOU ARE THE ONE 12:20 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40	SNAKES ON A PLANE 1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40	YOU, ME & DUPREE 12:55 / 3:55 / 6:15 / 8:55

Ali MALL 5

1	YOU ARE THE ONE 12:10 R4 / 1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30	2	ETERNITY	3	THE WICKER MAN 12:00 / 2:10 / 4:20 / 6:30 / 8:40
4	MONSTER HOUSE 12:00 / 2:00 / 4:00 / 6:00 / 8:00	5	THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA 12:15 / 3:05 / 5:55 / 8:45		DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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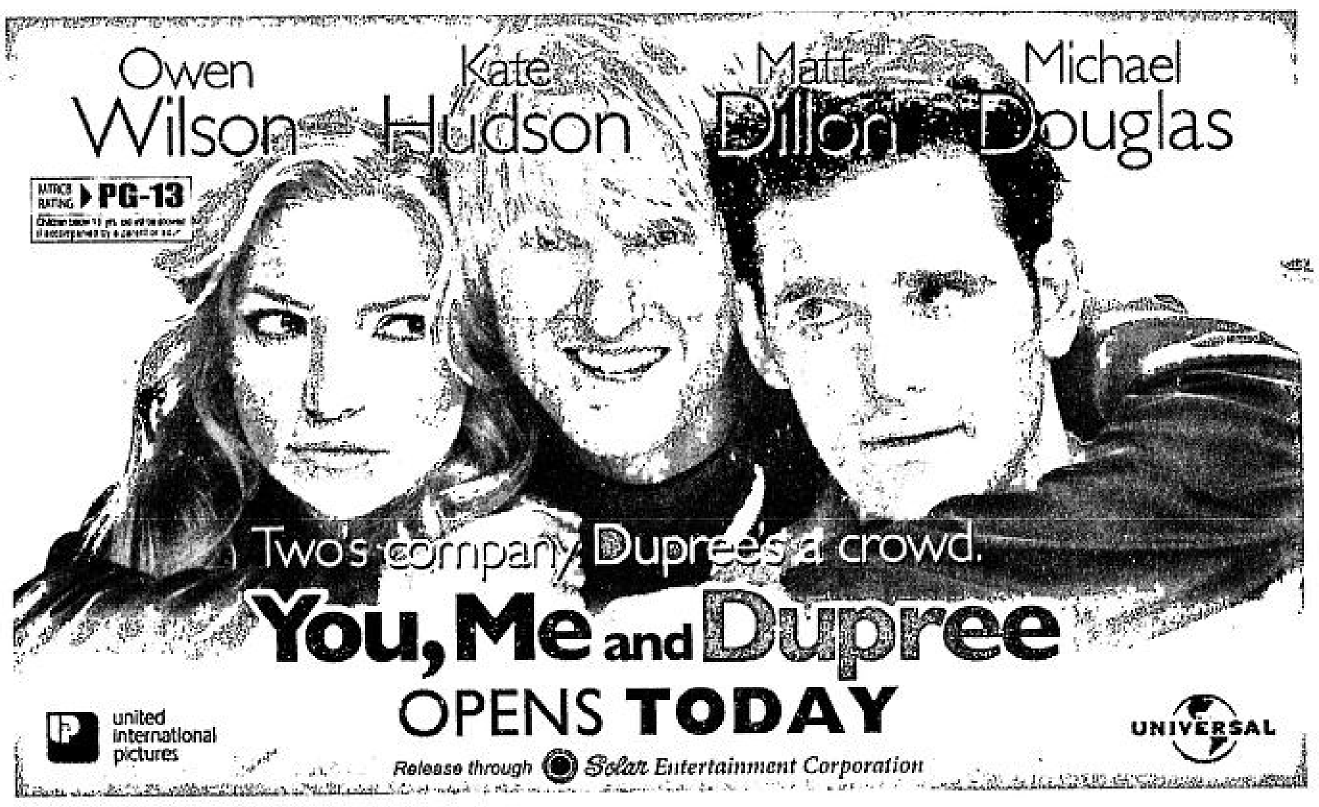

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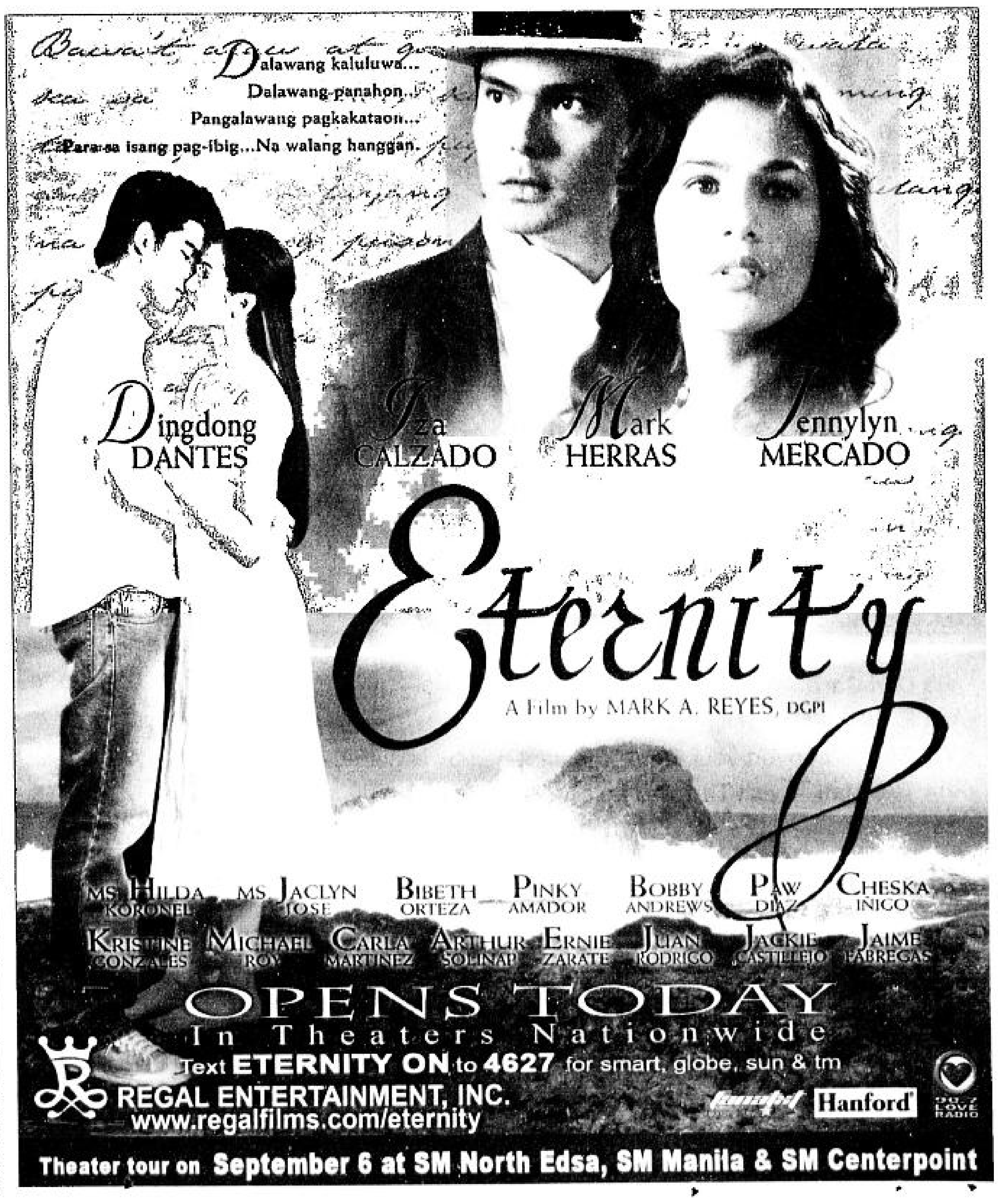

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Dalawang panahon...
Pangalawang pagkakataon...
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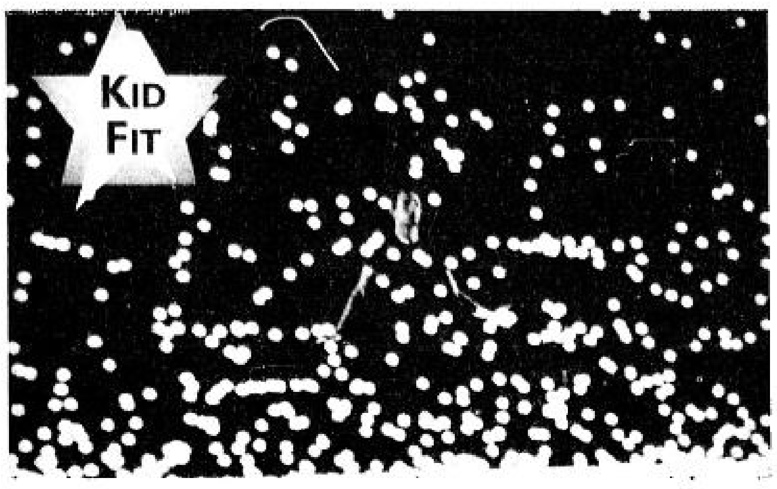
New circus

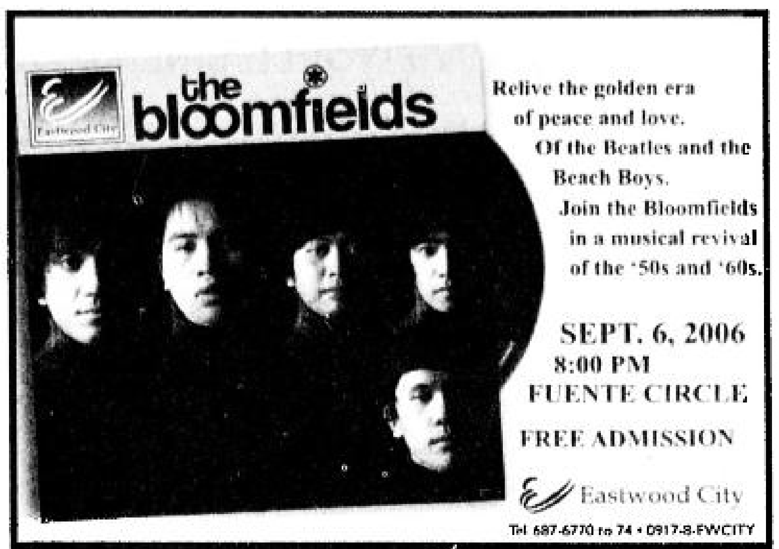
A MAGICAL SHOW COMBINING traditional fields of circus with new technology, lighting effects and electronic and classical music goes onstage at the CCP Little Theater on Sept. 8 at 7:30 p.m.

Presented by the Alliance Française of Manila, in collaboration with the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the French Society for Artistic Action, "Convergence 1.0" is a contemporary circus without the customary elephants, red-coated ring master and intrepid lion tamer.

Instead, it showcases contemporary dance and contact juggling, featuring juggler Adrien Monot and violin-cellist Veronik Soboljevski.

Tickets at P400 and P200 (for students) are available at the Alliance Française de Manille, CCP Box Office, Ticket World and selected branches of National Bookstore and Tower Records. Call 8957441 for details.

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1:55, 4:10, 6:25, 8:40, 11:00
G

3 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00
PG-13

4 THE WICKER MAN
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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA	2 YOU ARE THE ONE	3 THX THE WICKER MAN GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE LOST CITY	5 MONSTER HOUSE	6 YOU, ME & DUPREE	7 ETERNITY
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA	2 YOU, ME & DUPREE					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX YOU, ME & DUPREE GUARANTEED SEATS	3 MONSTER HOUSE GUARANTEED SEATS	4 YOU ARE THE ONE GUARANTEED SEATS	5 THE WICKER MAN GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX YOU, ME & DUPREE	2 MONSTER HOUSE	3 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA	4 YOU ARE THE ONE	5 THE WICKER MAN		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 MONSTER HOUSE	2 YOU ARE THE ONE	3 STAY ALIVE	4 ETERNITY			
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Market! Market! - 886 7519

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39th BPI Installment Madness August 30 to September 17, 2006	Philippine Robotics September 7, 2006
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Grandparent's Day Launching with Sharon Cuneta September 7, 2006	Panoxil's Pimple Free, Cash Spree September 10, 2006

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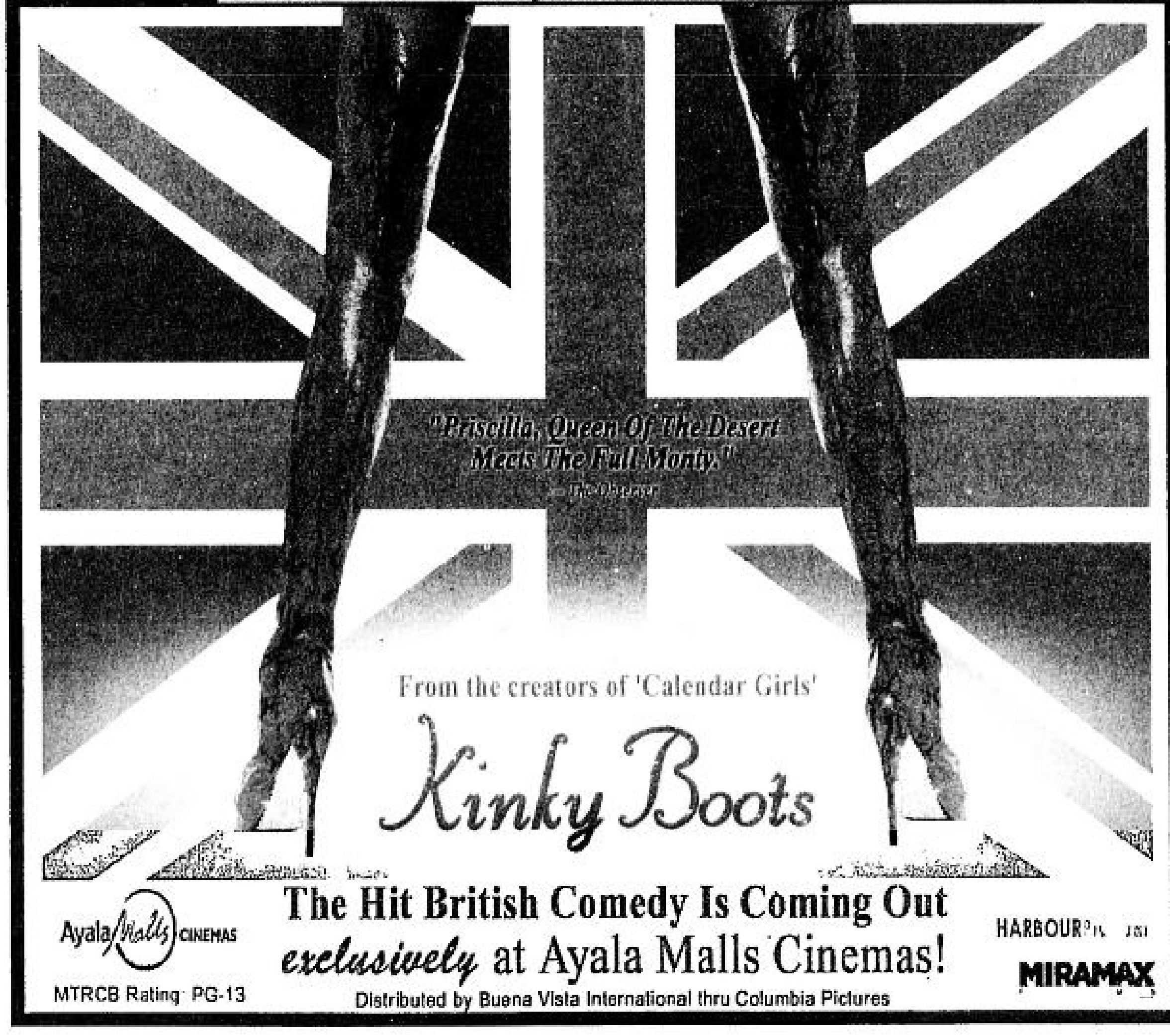
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Bridgeway Activity Ctr.
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Activity Center
Sept. 10, Sun., 4pm

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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA • THX
2 MONSTER HOUSE
3 WICKER MAN
4 YOU, ME AND DUPREE
5 ETERNITY
6 YOU ARE THE ONE
7 SNAKES ON A PLANE
8 LITTLE MAN
9 CLICK
10 STAY ALIVE

ERMITA 538-7809 to 12

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 WICKER MAN
3 YOU, ME AND DUPREE
4 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
5 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
6 MONSTER HOUSE
7 ETERNITY

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 WICKER MAN
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 YOU, ME AND DUPREE
4 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
5 MONSTER HOUSE
6 LITTLE MAN
7 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
8 ETERNITY

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 MONSTER HOUSE
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 ETERNITY
4 WICKER MAN

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

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2 YOU, ME AND DUPREE
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 WICKER MAN

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1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 ETERNITY
3 MORTUARY
4 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

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1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 ETERNITY
3 MONSTER HOUSE
4 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 ETERNITY
3 MONSTER HOUSE
4 MORTUARY

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 STAY ALIVE
3 MONSTER HOUSE
4 ETERNITY

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-6270

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 ETERNITY
3 MONSTER HOUSE
4 STAY ALIVE
5 SNAKES ON A PLANE
6 MIAMI VICE

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 MONSTER HOUSE
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 ETERNITY
4 MORTUARY
5 MIAMI VICE
6 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

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2 ETERNITY
3 MONSTER HOUSE
4 MORTUARY

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9:00PM
Admission Price- P350

1 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 YOU, ME AND DUPREE
3 WICKER MAN
4 MONSTER HOUSE
5 YOU ARE THE ONE
6 SARONG BANGGI

PREMIERE CINEMA
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WICKER MAN

THE PODIUM

CINEMA 1
YOU, ME AND DUPREE

CINEMA 2
DEVIL WEARS PRADA

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452

1 YOU, ME AND DUPREE
2 WICKER MAN
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
5 YOU ARE THE ONE
6 MONSTER HOUSE
7 WICKER MAN
8 ETERNITY
9 SARONG BANGGI
10 LITTLE MAN
11 SNAKES ON A PLANE
12 YOU, ME AND DUPREE

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901

1 WICKER MAN
2 YOU, ME AND DUPRE
3 PHILIPPINE IDOL
4 JOSEPH THE DREAMER
5 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
6 MONSTER HOUSE
7 SARONG BANGGI
8 SNAKES ON A PLANE
9 YOU ARE THE ONE
10 ETERNITY
11 LITTLE MAN
12 CLICK

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749

1 SARONG BANGGI
2 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
3 CLICK
4 SNAKE ON A PLANE
5 YOU, ME AND DUPRE
6 ETERNITY
7 WICKER MAN
8 MONSTER HOUSE
9 YOU ARE THE ONE
10 STAY ALIVE
11 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
12 LITTLE MAN

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

1 YOU, ME AND DUPRE
2 WICKER MAN
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 MONSTER HOUSE
5 ETERNITY
6 LITTLE MAN
7 SNAKES ON A PLANE
8 SARONG BANGGI
9 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
10 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 WICKER MAN
2 MONSTER HOUSE
3 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
4 ETERNITY
5 SNAKES ON A PLANE
6 YOU ARE THE ONE

SM CITY SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 WICKER MAN
2 MONSTER HOUSE
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 ETERNITY
5 YOU, ME AND DUPRE
6 SNAKES ON A PLANE
7 LITTLE MAN
8 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
9 SARONG BANGGI

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 ETERNITY
3 MONSTER HOUSE
4 WICKER MAN

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

1 SARONG BANGGI
2 YOU, ME AND DUPRE
3 SNAKES ON A PLANE
4 MONSTER HOUSE
5 WICKER MAN
6 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
7 CLICK
8 YOU ARE THE ONE
9 LITTLE MAN
10 STAY ALIVE
12 ETERNITY

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 ETERNITY
3 SNAKES ON A PLANE
4 MONSTER HOUSE

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917

1 SNAKES ON A PLANE
2 WICKER MAN
3 ETERNITY
4 YOU ARE THE ONE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975

1 WICKER MAN
2 ETERNITY
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 MONSTER HOUSE

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MONSTER HOUSE

SARONG BANGGI

THE WICKER MAN

You, Me and Dupree
YOU, ME and DUPREE

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1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 MONSTER HOUSE
3 JUST MY LUCK
4 ETERNITY

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17

1 MONSTER HOUSE
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 ETERNITY
4 STORMBREAKER

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868

1 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 LITTLE MAN
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 SNAKES A ON PLANE
5 MONSTER HOUSE
6 ETERNITY
7 MORTUARY
8 STAY ALIVE

LUZON

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04

1 ETERNITY
2 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
3 YOU ARE THE ONE
4 MIAMI VICE

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80

1 ETERNITY
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 MIAMI VICE
4 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45

1 MONSTER HOUSE
2 LITTLE MAN
3 ETERNITY
4 SARONG BANGGI
5 MORTUARY
6 YOU ARE THE ONE

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85

1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 MONTERS HOUSE
4 ETERNITY
5 SARONG BANGGI
6 ETERNITY

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160

1 STAY ALIVE
2 ETERNITY
3 STORMBREAKER
4 YOU ARE THE ONE

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66

1 MIAMI VICE
2 MONSTER HOUSE
3 ETERNITY
4 YOU ARE THE ONE

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876

1 SNAKE ON A PLANE
2 STORMBREAKER
3 MONSTER HOUSE
4 STAY ALIVE
5 SARONG BANGGI
6 ETERNITY
7 YOU ARE THE ONE
8 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422

1 MONSTER HOUSE
2 RESERVED
3 BUTTERFLY EFFECT 2
4 YOU ARE THE ONE
5 ETERNITY
6 MORTUARY
7 RESERVED
8 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998

1 ETERNITY
2 SARONG BANGGI
3 MONSTER HOUSE
4 BUTTERFLY EFFECT 2
5 YOU ARE THE ONE
6 STORMBREAKER

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884

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2 ETERNITY
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4 AMERICAN DREAMZ

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SM CENTERPOINT
CINEMA 1 • 9:00PM

MYMP
NOVEMBER 4, 2006
SM NORTH EDSA
CINEMA 1 • 9:00PM

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SM MEGAMALL
CINEMA 9 • 9:00PM

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ROUNDUP

'Donsol' award

ADOLF Alix's "Donsol," a movie about a whale shark guide, bagged the special jury prize in the Asian Marine Film Festival in Makuhari, Japan.

Only two awards were handed out in the festival. The Grand Prix went to Iran's "The Fish Fall In Love," by Ali Raffi.

"Donsol," which debuted and competed at the 2nd Cinemalaya Philippine International Independent Film Festival in July, competed with entries from Japan, Iran, Indonesia, South Korea and Taiwan.

"The entries are very interesting. Some of them already won in other film fests," Alix told INQUIRER Entertainment on Monday. "The audience of 'Donsol' was warm and receptive, even crying. They loved Sid (Lucero) and Angel (Aquino)."

Produced by Bicycle Productions, "Donsol" will compete in the Fort Luaderdale International Film Festival in the US in November. *Marinel R. Cruz*

Jocjoc on 'Probe'

PINKY Webb interviews Minda Pascual, a self-confessed former Angeles-based prostitute who now heads Bagong Kamalayan Collective Inc. on ABS-CBN's "Probe" tonight.

Cheche Lazaro reports on Jocjoc Bolante a year after the show broke the fertilizer fund scam.

Film fest bets

VENICE—Stephen Frears' "The Queen" has emerged as the most popular movie in the ongoing Venice Film Festival, but it still faces stiff competition for the Golden Lion.

With half the 21 films in the official competition screened, the other main contenders include Mexican director Alfonso Cuaron's apocalyptic view of global childlessness, "Children of Men" and veteran French director Alain Resnais' "Coeurs" (Private Fears in Public Places).

Cuaron's film is one of the most ambitious films screened at the festival so far and stars Clive Owen and Julianne Moore as activists fighting for the rights of immigrants. *AFP*

Hot docu

NEW YORK—Broadcasters say hesitancy by some CBS network affiliates to air a Sept. 11 documentary next week proves there has been a chilling effect on free speech rights since federal regulators cracked down after Janet Jackson's breast was exposed on TV in 2004.

Actor Robert De Niro hosts the award-winning documentary that began as a quest to follow a rookie firefighter on an ordinary day, but resulted in the only known video of the first plane striking the World Trade Center. It includes profanity and some horrific scenes.

Many CBS affiliates have decided to either replace the documentary or delay its broadcast until after 10 p.m., when the Federal Communications Commission loosens restrictions. *AP*

New show tackles . . .

From page D6

24, SM Davao. And Sept. 30, The Podium.

"The Island" is a bossa nova CD with 12 tracks bannered by its carrier single, "I Wish That I Was Making Love to You Tonight," a revival of the Alessi Brothers' '80s hit.

Sharon in Cebu

Sharon Cuneta performs in Cebu City on Sept. 9. Her show at the Cebu City Waterfront Hotel is the third leg of "The Philippine Mega Concert Tour 2006," after performances in Lucena City and Expo Clark Field in Pampanga.

After Cebu, the tour takes Sharon to Zamboanga City on Oct. 7, and Iloilo City on Oct. 21. Special guest is Christian Bautista.

'You, Me and Dupree'

Kate Hudson and Matt Dillon are passionate for each other, but Owen Wilson douses their ardor by intruding into their marital bliss in "You, Me and Dupree," a fun romp opening today. The stellar cast also includes Michael Douglas.

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

OPENS SEPTEMBER 13

AMERICA'S HOTTEST AND SEXIEST STARS
TOGETHER IN A DANGEROUSLY ROMANTIC COMEDY

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THE PERFECT MAN.
THE PERFECT MATCH.
THE PERFECT LOVE STORY?
scoop

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Peter Travers, ROLLING STONE

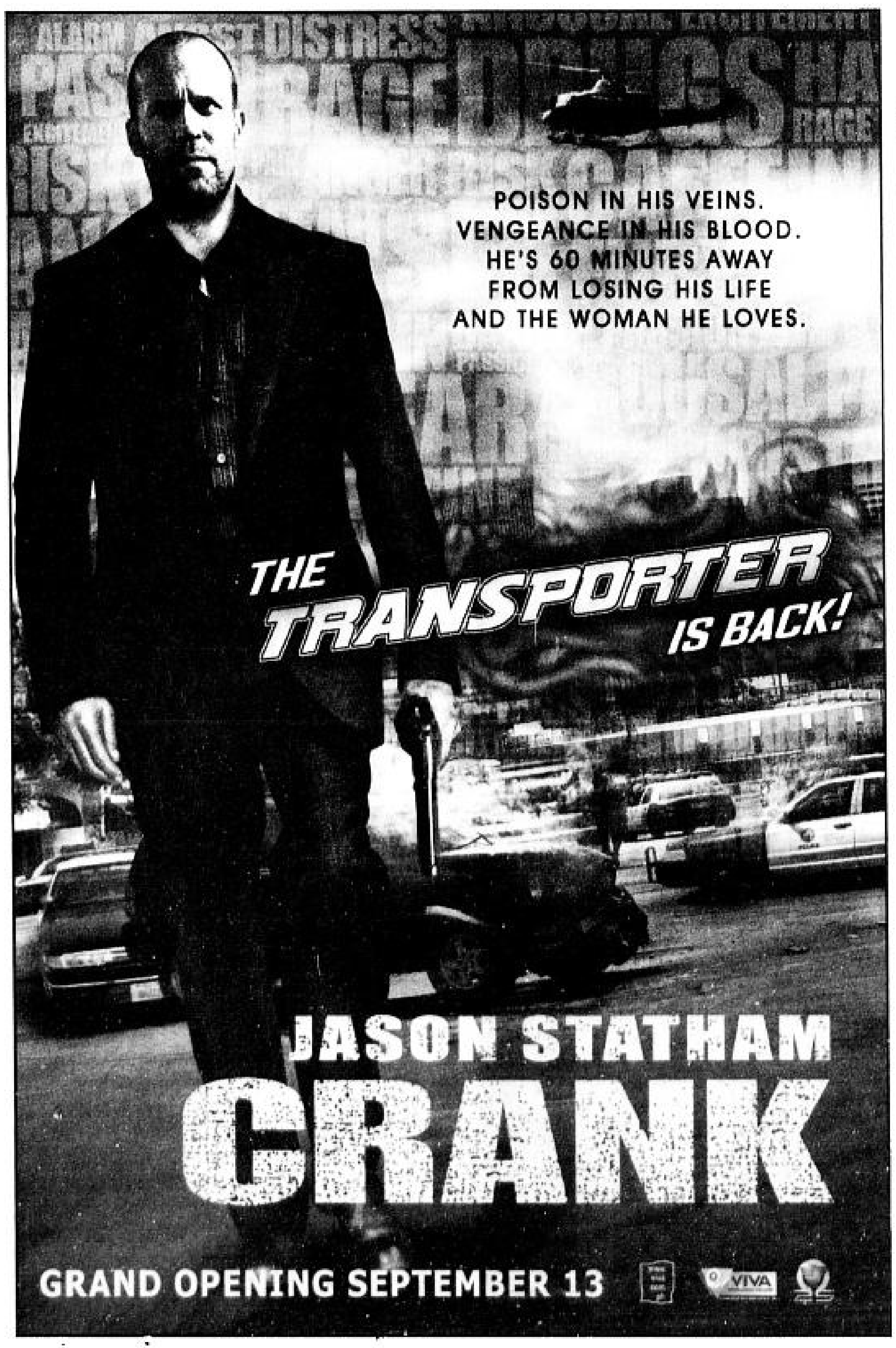
"JACKMAN IS IN FULL CARY GRANT MODE. JOHANSSON IS LUMINOUS!"
Bob Ross, TAMPA TRIBUNE

"A CHARMING, ROMANTIC COMEDY THRILLER"
Christy Karras, SALT LAKE CITY TRIBUNE

"THE FUNNIEST MOVIE OF THE YEAR SO FAR! FUNNY LIKE YOU WALK OUT WANTING TO TELL YOUR FRIENDS ITS BEST LINES. FUNNY LIKE YOU'RE WALKING DOWN THE STREET AND REMEMBER A MOMENT AND START LAUGHING LIKE AN IDIOT."
Mick LaSalle, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

"GUARANTEED TO KEEP YOU SMILING!"
Rex Reed, NEW YORK OBSERVER

"THERE ARE PLENTY OF OLD-SCHOOL MURDER-MYSTERY MOMENTS TO KEEP YOU GUESSING."
Lisa Kennedy, DENVER POST



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---*Christy Lemire, AP [Associated Press]*

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SNAKES ON A PLANE

SHANG CINEPLEX

① MONSTER HOUSE
MTRCB GP
1.00, 3.15, 5.30, 7.45, 10:00

② YOU, ME & DUPREE
MTRCB PG-13
12.00, 2.30, 5.00, 7:30, 10.00

③ THE WICKER MAN
MTRCB. R-13
12.00, 2:30, 5.00, 7:30, 10:00

④ DEVIL WEARS PRADA
MTRCB PG-13
12.00, 2.30, 5.00, 7.30, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE
YOU ARE THE ONE
MTRCB PG-13

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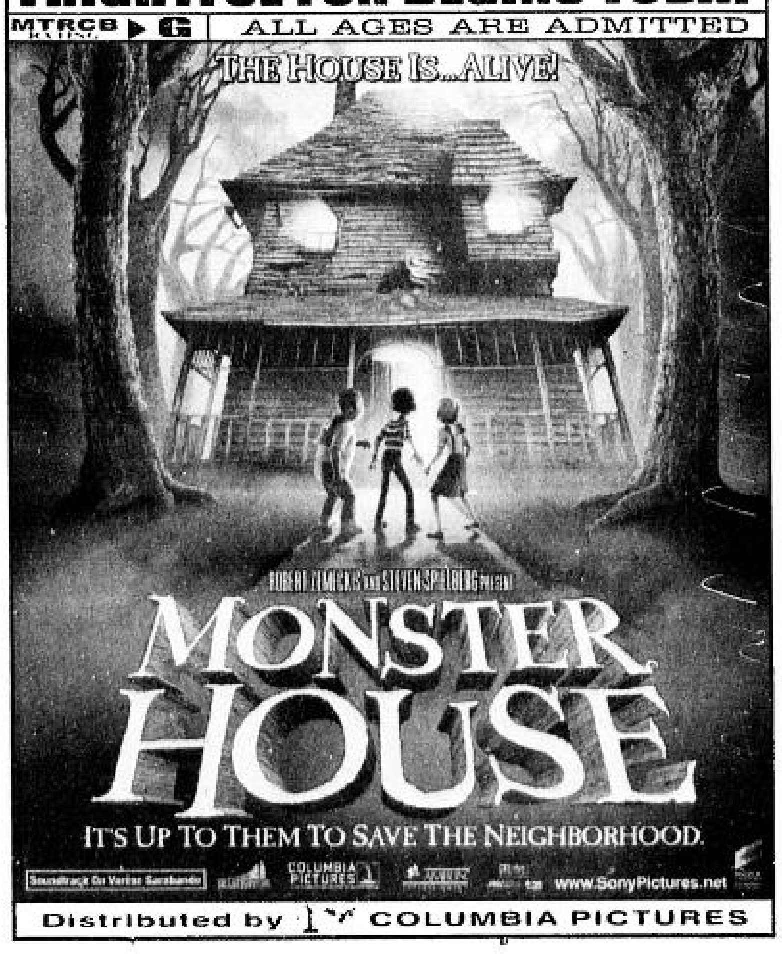
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2 (DOLBY) YOU, ME & DUPREE
3 (DOLBY) THE WICKER MAN
4 (DOLBY) THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) YOU ARE THE ONE

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1 MONSTER HOUSE
2 THE WICKER MAN
3 YOUR AR THE ONE
4 ETERNITY

starmall EDSA - SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7268160
3 ETERNITY
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) THE WICKER MAN
5 MONSTER HOUSE

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(ALABANG) tel. 8504286, 5433994
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2 MONSTER HOUSE
3 YOUR AR THE ONE
4 THE WICKER MAN

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1 ETERNITY
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

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Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
1 ETERNITY
2 YOUR AR THE ONE
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

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1 (DDS) THE WICKER MAN
2 (SDDS) SHAKES ON A PLANE
3 (DTS) MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
4 GOLD (DTS) MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
5 GOLD (DOLBY) YOU, ME & DUPREE
6 GOLD (SDDS) MONSTER HOUSE
7 GOLD (DOLBY) CLICK
8 (SRD) LITTLE MAN
9 (SRD) ETERNITY
10 (SRD) YOUR AR THE ONE

Blue Wave MARQUINTON
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) YOU ARE THE ONE
2 (DOLBY) ETERNITY
3 (DOLBY) MONSTER HOUSE
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) YOU, ME & DUPREE
2 THE WICKER MAN
3 ETERNITY
4 MONSTER HOUSE
5 YOU ARE THE ONE

THE MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 ETERNITY
2 MIAMI VICE
3 SNAKES ON A PLANE
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 ETERNITY
2 MONSTER HOUSE
3 YOU ARE THE ONE

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)-(4449346)
1 MONSTER HOUSE
2 THE BREAK UP

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY IN) MONTUARY
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 (DTS IN) MONSTER HOUSE
4 ETERNITY

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 ETERNITY
2 PLEASE CALL

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tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) YOU, ME & DUPREE
2 (DOLBY) MONSTER HOUSE
3 (DOLBY) THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
4 (DOLBY) THE WICKER MAN

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Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 ETERNITY
2 (DTS) MONSTER HOUSE
3 (DOLBY) YOU ARE THE ONE
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 ETERNITY
2 (DOLBY) MONSTER HOUSE
3 (DTS) YOU ARE THE ONE
4 MIAMI VICE

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 ETERNITY
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 (DOLBY) MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
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1 ETERNITY
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 (DOLBY) LITTLE MAN
4 (DTS) MY SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

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(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 MONSTER HOUSE
2 YOU ARE THE ONE
3 (DOLBY) ETERNITY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
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1 YOU ARE THE ONE
2 ETERNITY

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2 SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND

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(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) SUPER EX-GIRLFRIEND
2 PLEASE CALL
3 PLEASE CALL
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New show tackles Pinoy's positive and negative aspects

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

LAST MONDAY, CHANNEL 2 UNVEILED a new show, "Noypi, Ikaw Ba 'To?" that merits viewers' special attention because it "dares" to tackle issues related to the positive *and* negative aspects of the Filipino's psychological make-up.

We all know how Pinoys take criticism super-personally, so the people behind the show should be praised for their courage—and chutzpah—in telling it like it is as far as Filipinos' confounding mind set and behavioral traits are concerned.

Engagingly hosted by Tintin Bersola-Babao and Gabe Mercado, "Noypi" initially tackled questions related to Filipinos' being respectful and helpful—or not!

It correctly pointed out that Filipinos used to be famous for these traits, but went on to observe that they had been corroded by factors like hectic modern lifestyle and lack of good role models in the media, where many talents play it shrill and sassy.

Even better, the show "proved" its theses by conducting tests of how people really react to situations requiring them to be polite and helpful.

Alas, quite a number of rushing pedestrians caught on hidden camera failed the tests.

The less-than-praiseworthy outcome served as a timely reminder to viewers to be more respectful in their own lives.

The pilot show also tested children on their readiness to say "*po*" and to be respectful of their elderly.

Again, the findings were far from gratifying, so parents and teachers are advised to stress the need to bolster kids' awareness of the importance of these key symptoms and aspects of behavior and human interaction.

For these and other insights yet to come, we thank ABS-CBN for coming up with "Noypi, Ikaw Ba 'To?," and hope that other viewers patronize the show every Monday, to ensure its long and helpful tenure on the TV screen.

But we rue the fact that "Noypi" is aired after the late-night newscast "Bandila," which means that many young viewers won't be able to benefit from the points it raises.

This is a crying shame, because it's the youth who stand to learn the most from the behavioral lessons that "Noypi" teaches.

The show's time slot should be brought down to a more youth-friendly hour—or, if this isn't possible, it should be replayed at an earlier time on another day.

'Ballet at the Park'

"Ballet at the Park" is staged at Rizal Park's Open-Air Auditorium. Schedule: Sept. 9, "Handog!" featuring members of the St. Paul Pasig Cultural Arts and the Vella C. Damian School of Ballet. Sept. 30, student of the La Union Dance Tutorial Services of San Fernando, La Union, present several popular ballets under the artistic direction of Edwin "Nonoy" Vicente.

'Colliding Continents'

Where did the land beneath our feet come from? National Geographic Channel's "Naked Science: Colliding Continents" takes viewers back in time to the oldest rocks on Earth, to see how the first continents formed on our fledging planet. Then, using computer simulations, the program traces the progress of the continents over the next 250 million years.

Premiere telecast was last Monday, with repeats at 11 p.m. on Sept. 7, and 4 p.m. on Sept. 11.

'The Island'

Agot Isidro makes the rounds of SM malls to promote her new CD, "The Island," Schedule: Sept. 8, SM North Edsa. Sept 10, SM Baguio. Sept. 15, SM Sta. Rosa. Sept. 17, SM Cebu. Sept. 22, SM Fairview. Sept.

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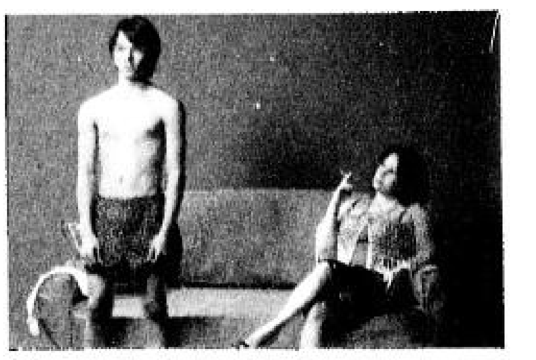

Sarong Banggi

Stars Jaclyn Jose, Angelo Ilagan, Alchris Galura

Directed by Emmanuel de la Cruz

An entry to the first Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival, this digital movie was graded B by the Cinema Evaluation Board and won for lead star Jose this year's Urian Best Actress award. Like the Bicolano song of the same title, the film transpires on just one night—chronicling the chance encounter between an aging prostitute and a teenaged boy at the crossroads of life. Newcomer Ilagan "delivers a very touching performance," according to INQUIRER critic and Urian member Lito Zulueta. Scriptwriter Ricky Lee commends Jose: "She brings grace to every move and gesture." Filmmaker Ellen Ongkeko-Marfil raves: "It's a very brave, quiet, intense film." Writer-director De la Cruz admits that he named his hapless heroine Jaclyn "as a tribute to Jose and all the fallen Filipinas she has portrayed on-screen." Exclusively showing in all SM Digital Cinemas.

Eternity

Stars Dingdong Dantes, Iza Calzado, Mark Herras, Jennylyn Mercado, Hilda Koronel, Jaclyn Jose

Directed by Mark Reyes

The fifth feature of TV director Reyes, this film is his follow-up to "Moments of Love," a romance drama exploring the impossible love of a couple separated by different decades. This time, he tackles the undying love between a pair of reincarnated lovers. In an interview with INQUIRER Entertainment, Reyes insisted that Dantes and Calzado's screen chemistry was "undeniable ... even if they are not romantically involved in real life." He also said Herras and Mercado had "matured a lot ... their tandem is still magical, in spite of what has happened in their personal life." One of his personal favorite scenes is the confrontation between this year's Urian winners Jose and Koronel, which was set in a colonial church. "It gave me goose bumps."

You, Me and Dupree

Stars Owen Wilson, Kate Hudson, Matt Dillon, Michael Douglas

Directed by Anthony and Joe Russo

Quick on the heels of his previous hit "Wedding Crashers," Wilson plays the titular Dupree, the best man who stayed too long not just at the reception, but also in the conjugal home. Complicating matters is a nasty father-in-law (Douglas) who's determined to wreak havoc on the life of the newlyweds (Hudson and Dillon). Philip Wuntch of Dallas Morning News complains that the movie "features three first-rate actors in need of a first-rate movie ... The cast provides the merriment, but the high jinks are more fleeting than memorable." Steven Rea of Philadelphia Inquirer describes it as "amiable, if ragtag ... [it] offers a comic take on the twentysomething dilemma of 'growing up.' " Pete Vonder Haar of Film Threat says it "plays like a series of poorly connected sitcom scripts."

Monster House

With the voices of Steven Buscemi, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Kathleen Turner, Jason Lee

Directed by Gil Kenan

When they knock on the door of the home owned by the neighborhood's grizzled grump (Buscemi), trick-or-treaters will get more than they bargain for on Halloween night. Turns out, the "creaky old house" has "an appetite for trespassers" and it's now up to three fearless kids to convince the adults of the perils ahead. Sean Axmaker of Seattle Post-Intelligencer says it's "imaginative and delightful ... With a sensibility that falls somewhere between Stephen King and Tim Burton ... [it's] a horror movie for kids with bite, heart and a poignant happy ending that's entirely earned and completely rewarding." Duane Dudek of Milwaukee Journal Sentinel asserts that it's "cute, fun and smart ... 'Home Alone' and 'Leave It to Beaver' set in 'The Twilight Zone.' " Ann Hornaday of Washington Post is unimpressed: "[It's] grisly, often cynical ... joyless ... an eyesore."

The Wicker Man

Stars Nicolas Cage, Ellen Burstyn, Leelee Sobieski, Frances Conroy

Directed by Neil LaBute

A remake of a 1973 British cult classic that starred Christopher Lee, this thriller trails a sheriff (Cage) investigating a missing persons report on a small island overran with a coven of secretive pagans. Frank Scheck of The Hollywood Reporter states that "[although] it's far more ambitious and stylish than most of today's horror crop ... it falls far short of its mark and is unlikely to inspire [the original's] rabid following." Michael Atkinson of LA Weekly points out that it's "muddy ... overwritten ... letting the story roam in circles just like Cage." Josh Tyler of Cinemablend.com concurs: "If there's a problem ... it's the script ... [The director] does a fine job of translating it to 2006, but the idea behind it isn't as cool as it once was ... The not-so-surprising ending seems silly and laughable."

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